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COMING NEXT WEEK:

BIGHT FLUKE

About the Cover—

Newsday outdoor scribe Nick Karas adds a nice linesider to the fishbox of John DeMaio's charterboat "Vivienne." The June run of stripers is just around the corner.

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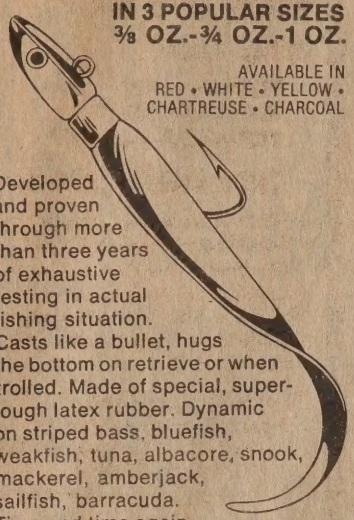

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"I fear that all we have accomplished is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve."

Admiral Yamamoto
December 9th, 1941

Those of you who have seen the excellent movie *Tora, Tora, Tora!* will remember the quote above as being the words of the famous Admiral Yamamoto in the last scene after he had just been informed that the Japanese ultimatum had not been delivered until after the attack on Pearl Harbor was already history. Although the attack had been an unprecedented victory militarily, the resulting "dastardly sneak attack" was a psychological disaster as it "woke a sleeping giant and filled him with a terrible resolve." If you're wondering at this point if all this history has anything to do with fishing, stop wondering—it doesn't, but some of us pulp writers get paid by the word.

But the words quoted above do have some meaning in relation to the present situation with Japanese longliners fishing in American waters. Last week I spent three days in Florida at the *Fourth Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium*, and one of the sessions was on the Japanese longline fishery in the Gulf of Mexico—which has been a major area of controversy since the implementation of the 200-Mile Limit. The one major defect in the legislation was that it had exempted the Atlantic bluefin and yellowfin tuna from the fisheries jurisdiction of the United States on the supposed basis that the tunas were highly migratory ocean species and, therefore, could not be adequately managed unilaterally by a single country. Actually, the real reason for the tuna exemption from the 200-Mile Limit was a concession to the powerful American tuna lobby in Washington, which has a sweetheart arrangement with the U.S. Government. For many years now, American tuna fishermen have been fishing illegally within the 200-Mile fisheries limit of other nations, and when their vessels and catches have been seized and confiscated by the outraged countries, our own Government has been eager to pay the tuna fishermen's fines. Needless to say, if the U.S. tried to include the management of tuna in our 200-mile fisheries limit, it would serve to legitimize the limits set by these other countries and the tuna lobby would see their sweetheart deal with Uncle Sam go down the bilge.

But exempting tuna from U.S. management means that we have no control over the Japanese longliners fishing our territorial waters, which has created some real management problems. Most of their fishing for giant bluefin tuna, which yields the high quality *sashimi* and *sushi* that brings as much as $20 a pound on the retail market in Japan, is being done in the Gulf of Mexico from February through the middle of June when the fish are in a pre-spawn condition. Indeed, slides were shown at the Symposium showing the roe taken from giant bluefin tuna that were several feet in length ... millions upon millions of eggs that would never have a chance to hatch and rebuild the dangerously depleted tuna stocks. In 1977 the Japanese longliners in the Gulf of Mexico caught 9,076 giant bluefins, but after being put under pressure to stop this slaughter of such a popular game fish they negotiated to cut down on their catch, which they did ... in 1978 they only took 8,059 giants! The really aggravating part of the whole situation is that during this period that the Japanese were decimating the brood stock of bluefin tuna, our own domestic commercial and sportfishermen were fishing under strict management regulations that limited our catches to between two and three thousand fish. And virtually all of these fish were purchased by Japanese traders waiting at the dock to pay fishermen between $.70 and $1.85 per pound.

As if the Japanese massacre of giant tuna weren't enough, there is

another problem with this fishery. Because the baited longlines (which range in length from forty to sixty miles) cannot distinguish between tuna and billfish, a substantial number of such other big game fish as swordfish, marlin, sailfish and sharks are also taken as an "incidental catch" to the tuna fishing. In 1978, according to data gathered by American observers aboard Japanese longline vessels, more than 2,000 swordfish and 5,000 marlin were taken "incidental" to tuna fishing! Although all billfish must be returned to the water, there is an extremely high mortality rate and most of the fish are dead by the time the longlines are retrieved: the mortality rate for swordfish was 85% and for marlin it was 62%. Surprisingly, the mortality rate for sharks ranged between 10% and 20%—shooting a lot of holes through the theory that sharks must be able to swim to survive.

After the slide presentation and lecture, Alan Macnow, who is the American representative for the Japan Fisheries Association, stood up and tried to make a rebuttal on the accuracy of the figures for the number of billfish that were being taken. His contention was that the figures were based on American observers aboard only eighteen percent of the Japanese vessels, and the extrapolation of these figures left room for gross inaccuracies. (Mr. Macnow is probably correct ... the catches on vessels *without* the prying eyes of observers are probably much *higher.*) When I stood up and asked him if he was hinting that the Japanese were requesting American observers on *all* of their vessels so that the figures would be more reliable, he suddenly did an about-face on the importance of the inaccuracies of having only eighteen percent of the vessels observed and quickly changed the subject.

Earlier that day, during the morning break in the Symposium, Mr. Macnow came over to me and introduced himself as "Hi, I'm so-and-so, and I represent the people you sportfishermen hate." (That passes for "public relations man" humor these days, folks.) He then introduced me to a Japanese gentleman who was an official of the Japan Fisheries Service. In an attempt to take the sharpness off his American representative's somewhat harsh introduction, I diplomatically told the Japanese gentleman that "Naturally, we don't really hate you—but in the words of your immortal Admiral Yamamoto, *'you have awakened a sleeping giant, and filled him with a terrible resolve'.*"

One of the Americans that the Japanese seem to have filled with a terrible resolve to do something about this situation is United States Congressman Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. Congressman McCloskey is the Ranking Minority Member on the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, which is where any legislation concerning American fisheries must pass; and this month he has introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives to include the tuna in the jurisdiction of the 200-Mile Limit. In a letter to the Committee's Chairman, Rep. John Murphy, Mr. McClosky stated:

"Dear Jack: We are on the verge of a tuna war. The reason: the exemption for tuna which we wrote into our 200-Mile Limit bill in 1976. It is time to repeal that exemption. When we extended our fishing jurisdiction to two hundred miles, we carefully exempted tuna. We wanted to be able to argue that because we were not asserting jurisdiction over tuna within our 200-mile zone, other countries could not assert jurisdiction in their 200-mile zones. This was both arrogant and unwise, and we are now beginning to pay the price. For example, the failure to exert management authority over tuna within our 200-mile zone has resulted in an influx of Japanese fishing boats, especially in the Gulf of Mexico, damaging the U.S. sportfishing industry. These vessels use fishing methods which result in a sixty-four percent mortality rate for their incidental catch of billfish (white marlin, sailfish and spearfish), 9,177 of which were taken in 1976 to the severe detriment and consternation of the U.S. sportfishing industry.

"The failure to recognize other countries' jurisdiction has resulted in seizure of U.S. vessels and crews and confrontations on the high seas. In January, two U.S. vessels were seized by Costa Rican authorities. The expert judgement of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee was that these seizures would continue and recommended that $1.5 million be available in fiscal year 1980 for payment of fines levied on U.S. tuna fishermen for fishing without licenses. The State Department is concerned about these confrontations, and in a letter to Chairman Murphy on March 20, 1979, suggested that the U.S. tuna industry be prepared to accept an accommodation on this issue (by admitting coastal state management authority) to avoid such 'explosive confrontations'."

It should not go unnoticed that Congressman McClosky is a representative of the State of California, where the West Coast tuna fleets

(Continued on page 50.)

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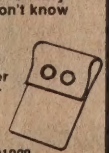

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DEEPENING AND WIDENING THE JONES INLET AND THE FREEPORT CHANNEL PROPOSED

The House Public Works Committee has authorized $950 thousand for a study by the Army Corps of Engineers on the feasibility of enlarging and deepening the Jones Inlet and the Freeport Channel, Congressman Norman F. Lent, (R-N.Y.) announced today.

Lent said he was informed of the Committee action by Rep. Don Clausen (R-Cal.) of the Public Works Committee who said that the survey will "determine the economic and engineering feasibility for deepening, widening and extending the existing channel to accommodate larger and deeper draft fishing vessels." Clausen told Lent the Committee approval completes the Congressional action needed for the study and congratulated the Long Island Congressman for his "persistent and determined efforts to get the Committee to act."

Lent called the Committee action "a great step forward! In order to get the Army Corps of Engineers to work on the study as soon as possible, I am contacting the House Appropriations Committee urging the Committee to provide the capability to allow the Corps to get the survey under way this year.

"The cooperation of the Army Engineers in this matter has been splendid so far, and I am urging the Engineers to do what they can to begin the study as soon as funds become available."

Lent concluded, "Enlarging and deepening the Jones Inlet and the Freeport Channel to make them safer and to enable them to accommodate larger fishing vessels holds the promise of a major increase in economic activity and growth for this area of Nassau County. I intend to continue to pursue this project as vigorously as possible."

Forty thousand boats a year use Jones Inlet to go between the sheltered waters of Long Island's South Shore and the Atlantic Ocean. The Inlet is one of the more dangerous stretches of water on Long Island's hundreds of miles of coastline. It's a shallow, narrow channel, partially blocked by constantly shifting sand bars, made more treacherous by swift-running currents. It takes a skilled skipper to navigate Jones Inlet and if your boat's too big, it'll run aground.

Last week, at my request, the House Public Works and Transportation Committee took a major step toward improving the Inlet and making it safer for both the pleasure

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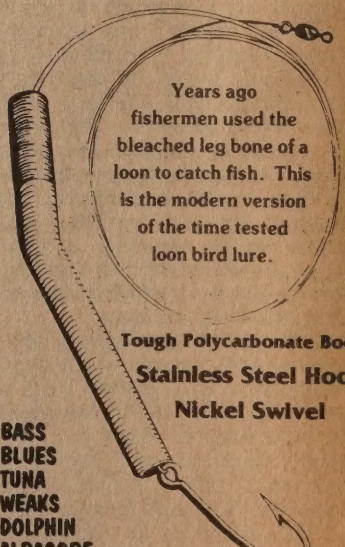

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boats which use the Inlet and the commercial and party fishermen who use it now and want to make greater use of it with larger, more efficient boats. The Committee authorized $950 thousand for an engineering and economic feasibility study of enlarging and deepening both the Jones Inlet and Freeport Channel.

This study is not aimed at stop-gap measures to clear portions of the channel for one summer of boating. Rather, it's a long-term project aimed at stabilizing the Inlet, deepening the channel, making the Inlet safer for all boats which use it, and making the rich Atlantic fishing grounds more accessible to Long Island-based fishing fleets.

The fishing industry on Long Island already generates some $75 million annually for our economy and employs between nine and ten thousand people. Many of the businessmen who earn their living from the sea tell me they want to expand, providing more jobs for Long Island and fresher, higher quality seafood for our tables, but they cannot because the larger fishing boats needed for such expansion cannot make it through Jones Inlet to Freeport and Point Lookout where the fish-processing industry is already located.

Both the House Public Works and Transportation Committee and the Army Corps of Engineers have recognized the need for a study of this dangerous, but heavily trveled, Inlet. These approvals are crucial first steps in developing a comprehensive plan for improving Jones Inlet to foster Long Island's burgeoning fishing industry and to make the inlet safer for every skipper who uses it.

I am now urging the House Appropriations Committee and the Army Corps of Engineers to do all that they can to expedite action on the study. I hope it can begin later this year. The sooner the study is under way, the better for Long Island.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE GROUNDFISH MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 1980

The New England Fishery Management Council will hold a public hearing on Long Island to discuss changes in the Fishery Management Plan for cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder. These changes take effect in the 1980 fishing year for groundfish which begins October 1, 1979.

There are several changes which are of interest to New York fishermen.

Recent stock assessments point toward greater quantities of cod and haddock available in the 1980 season. Based on an assessment of the yellowtail flounder fishery there will be another year of strictly enforced landing limits.

New mesh sizes have also been established. This regulation takes effect October 1. The new mesh size

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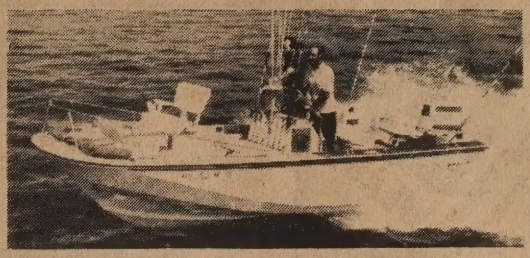

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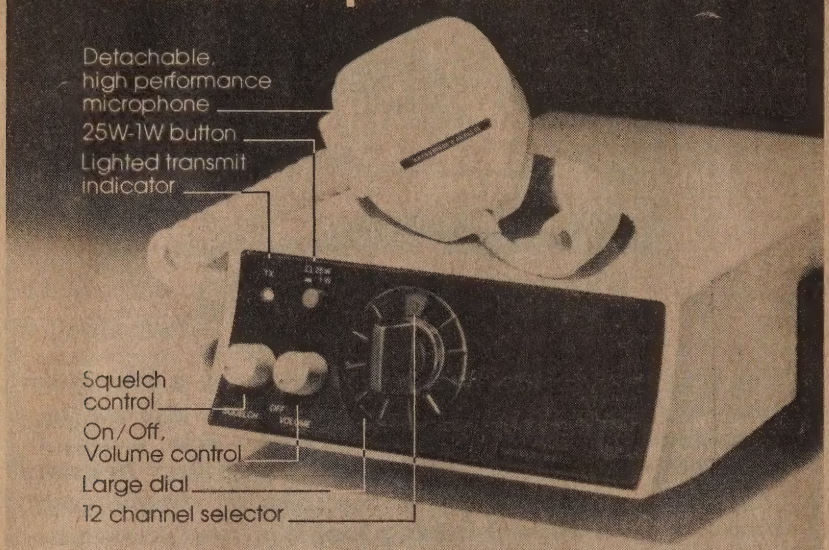

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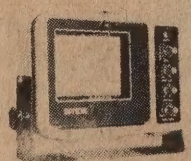

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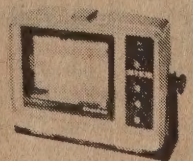

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for **cod and haddock** in the cod end is 5½''. Mesh restrictions for yellowtail flounder in the Southern New England and Long Island regions will be the same as last year at 5-1/8'' in the cod end.

A minimum legal length has been established for cod and haddock. Under this amendment 18'' is the minimum length, and not more than 10% of all landed cod and haddock can be under 18''.

An important change in next year's regulations has to do with ''piggybacking.'' Piggybacking was a loophole in the landing regulations which allowed fishermen to land more than they were entitled to. This was done any number of ways. Piggybacking was largely to blame for the yellowtail flounder closure of last winter. By hailing fish from west of 69°, the quarterly allocation was used up, and the market price increased substantially.

This new set of regulations will stop piggybacking.

An issue still to be resolved is the allocation process. For 1980, the allocations are still made quarterly on a vessel class basis. Once one-half of a quarterly allocation is caught, that vessel class must fish under reduced landing limits. Depending on the fall and winter weather, and effort exerted in New England, Long Island fishermen could again be faced with lower landing limits and even closures **before** the cod and yellowtail move down off Long Island.

The hearing is scheduled for May 29 at 7PM, in Riverhead at the Holiday Inn. It is an opportunity to voice your opinion of the proposed amendments to the New England Fishery Management Council.

CLUB NEWS

HUNTINGTON ANGLERS

The Huntington Anglers chartered the Ever Ready for their annual Flounder Trip. The charter was captained by Bill ''Packey'' Collins. Mackerel were the big thing, but flounder winners were as follows: Graham Snediker—1½ lbs. Other winners: Bill Marsh, Richard Pergolizzi and John Kulju. Thirty-two members attended and really hauled those macks in around Buoy 8.

JAMES MAY ORGANIZATION

If you are interested in joining a real fishing club, not a social organization, then the Tournament Anglers is for you! A limited number of openings are now available. For further information, contact Joe Masone or Stephen Weitzen at (516) 889-2339.

Hurry now to be admitted in time for the fabulous season coming up!

BOATING

ATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK JUNE 3 TO JUNE 10

The purpose of National Safe oating Week is to focus the ttention of the public upon the afety measures required in the peration of pleasure vessels.

Free courtesy motorboat examinaons by members of Flotilla 13-3, .S. Coast Guard Auxiliary on unday 6/3, Saturday 6/9 and unday 6/10 at East and West empstead Marina in Point Lookout. he examiners will check each boat rought in to make sure it has the roper safety equipment.

Boating at night can be fund—and 's sometimes necessary. The ommittee for National Safe Boating Veek reminds skippers to reduce peed and keep a sharp lookout. hoals and other fixed obstacles can e dangerous, but so can moving nes—like a string of barges with a ght in front, a light in back and 600 eet of darkness in-between. Remember: **Safe Boating is No Accident.** Has your fire extinguisher een tested within the last six nonths?

The more you know about boating, the more fun it is. One of the best ways to learn more about the sport is to join the 350,000 boatmen who annually take part in some sort of formal education in things nautical. For information on the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary courses, call your local Coast Guard telephone number. 1979 marks the 40th Anniversary of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

New Products

S&G NEW TUBE LURES

The S&G Tackle Co., Inc., has just brought out a new "R.P.M." series of trailer lures for use on umbrella rigs. Made in three sizes and seven colors, all sizes utilize 50 lb. test leaders and 185 lb. test bead chain. The manufacturer states that due to the special heads, the lures swim directly behind the umbrella, decreasing the likelihood of them hanging the bottom. This same feature is also said to make the rig appear much more like an actual school of bait fish.

SHIMANO' S GRAPHITE BASS CASTING RODS

Once again, Shimano American Corp. has the tackle industry buzzing. The excitement is over a series of graphite casting rods that were designed especially to match the outstanding performance capabilities of Shimano's popular Bantam-100 bass reel.

Shimano's graphite casting series boasts all the important bass casting features. Lightweight graphite blanks are fast, responsive and powerful. Guides are aluminum oxide—smooth and hard. They offer less friction for reduced line wear and greater casting distance. The most talked about feature on these outstanding new rods is Shimano's unique Colfor casting handle. It's lightweight, yet incredibly strong. Shimano's superior cold forging techniques assure that Colfor handles are precise to within +.001". That means uniform weight distribution, balance and easy replacement of damaged blanks. A smoked silver finish makes Colfor the most handsome handle a man can fish.

Shimano's graphite rods and Colfor handles make an unbeatable bass casting combination when teamed with the lightning fast Bantam. Your tackle dealer can recommend the Shimano graphite rod model best suited to your fishing conditions. Visit him soon!

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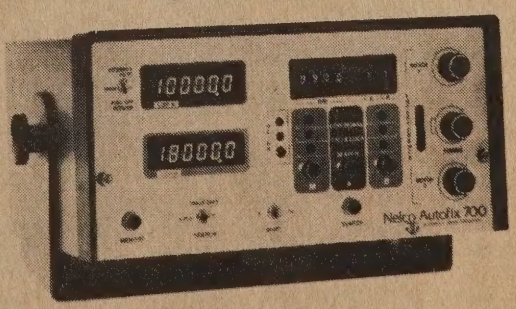

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NATIONAL SCENE

NEWS & NOTES ON THE WORLD OF FISHING
with Al Ristori

Sportfishing Symposium Focuses on Licensing Issue

Many interesting topics were on the agenda at the Fourth Annual Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium held at the Bahia Mar Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, May 7-8. However, it was the licensing debate at the end of the program that drew the most response. The Symposium is sponsored by the International Game Fish Association (IGFA), National Coalition for Marine Conservation, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Sport Fishing Institute. It attracts a goodly representation of fishery biologists, fishery managers, Federal and State officials, and concerned sportfishermen. Under those circumstances, it's not surprising that there was a basic pro-license bias among most of those assembled.

Mark Sosin served as moderator of the two sessions devoted to the marine recreational license question. The only speaker completely opposed to such a license was Captain Dan Garnsey, a well-known party boat operator from Pompano Beach, Florida, representing the National Party Boat Owners Alliance. Dan conceded that ever-increasing pressure was having a negative effect on the fisheries, and was in favor of needed research. However, he saw no justification for making the sportsman pay for a license when he is already paying many other taxes related to his sport which are only going into the general fund. He cited the sales tax on party boat fare in Florida, as well as sales taxes on fishing-related equipment and marine fuel taxes.

Robert J. Kemp, Jr., Director of Fisheries, Texas Parks & Wildlife, stated that a marine license will not hurt tourism. However, his state, like California, is not a good example in this regard. Texas is a huge state with a long coastline that draws almost all its tourism from within the state. A single yearly resident license costing only $4.25 covers both fresh and salt water fishing. Even non-residents are fairly accommodated with a three-day license costing only $1.25 for both fresh and salt water. I'm sure that if other states were willing to issue a combination license at the price Texas is charging, there would be relatively little opposition. As is quite obvious to anyone who's recently purchased a freshwater license anywhere in the east, the cost of that license alone is far more than Texas is charging for a combination license!

Kemp also went over the list of coastal states to see what they have done about marine licensing. He found that almost all states with licenses combine both fresh and salt water, and only in Mississippi can party and charter boats cover their fishermen by buying a boat license. Alabama has just instituted a marine license that applies only to non-residents. Of the sixteen states (including all the Atlantic Coast states) with no license, thirteen have no present plans to institute one.

Former Assitant Secretary of the Interior, Nathaniel Reed made an impassioned speech about the sad state of conservation and management in his home state of Florida. Reed, who was fighting for the environment long before it became fashionable, reviewed the sad history of development in Florida which has resulted in a tremendous loss of breeding habitat and had a serious impact on the State's fisheries. He noted that until 1968, developers were able to do anything they wanted, and governors took the attitude that mangrove swamps were simply mosquito-breeding areas that should be filled in as quickly as possible. All this changed when Governor Kirk was elected in 1968; but Reed feels the Bureau of Natural Resources is still failing to do its job of protecting the environment—and also charged that it is shot through with corruption. Reed noted that commercial fishing is very big business in Florida, but over-emphasized by the Bureau in relation to the enormous economic impact of recreational fishing. While an advocate of a marine recreational license, Reed cannot justify giving such a great amount of money to the present Bureau. Pending reorganization, he suggested a token $1 fee simply to identify the sportsmen and demonstrate their potential power.

Chris Weld, Executive Director of the National Coalition for Marine Conservation, presented a model statute that has been drawn up by a number of experts as a guide toward state implementation of a marine recreational license. It basically advocates a state-by-state approach, with reciprocal rights between contiguous states in shared bodies of water (such as Long Island Sound and Delaware Bay). A $5 minimum fee was suggested, with all funds to be dedicated and distribution to be determined by an appointed policy control board made up of both anglers and scientists. A complicated provision is also provided which attempts to keep administrative expenses low and prevent loss of general funding presently available. Licenses for party and charter boats that will cover their passengers are also endorsed.

Bill Figley, representing the State of New Jersey, detailed the opposition of the anglers in that state to a marine license. He went over the current effort to pass Bill #1339, which would establish a marine fisheries commission within the state. The Bill passed the Senate only after an amendment was added which specifically stated that nothing in the act would require a saltwater license. Despite commercial, and some sport, opposition that bill has passed out of committee in the Assembly and has a good chance of passage. The proposed commission would be made up of four sportsmen, four commercial fishermen, and three "public" members. A $500,000 appropriation from general funds is included. The commission would have regulatory authority over state waters and, hopefully, would blend in with the Mid-Atlantic Council's jurisdiction over Federal (three miles out) waters. While the saltwater license is definitely "out" in New Jersey at this time, effective and responsible action by the new commission could smooth the way for public acceptance of a license in the future.

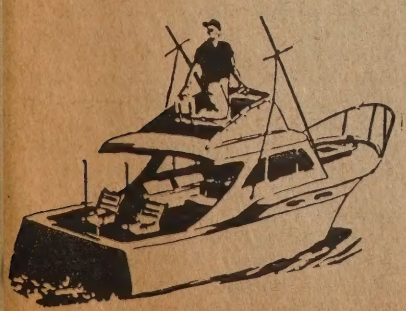
Scott Simons presented an angler's viewpoint of the licensing issue. He pointed out the lack of facilities available to New York marine fishermen, and the insignificant amount of money devoted to the marine finfish program. Unfortunately, his excellent paper could only be summarized in the ten minutes available to each speaker during the last session. Scott noted the power exercised by freshwater fishermen and hunters as the result of being licensed, and predicted that if saltwater anglers were to be licensed, they'd form one of the most powerful interest groups in the state.

Percy Washington, a sportfishing NMFS biologist from Seattle, emphasized our legal and moral obligation to manage the fisheries, whether it be with general funds or license fees. Billy Putnam, charter boat skipper from Panama City, Florida (and a member of the Gulf Fishery Management Council) spoke in favor of a license.

The comment and question period produced the most fireworks. Outdoor writer Lou Rodia was sent down to the Symposium at the last minute by a hastily assembled group of South Jersey sportsmen. H

presented very strong and well-reasoned arguments against the license—emphasizing that it would prevent the casual fisherman from enjoying the sport, and also hurt tourist dependent businesses. California charter boat operator, Russ Izor stated that management of the fisheries in his state had been a failure, even though they've long had a license. Dave Green, representing the New York State DEC, conceded that at present New York only manages people—not fish. Dave also pointed out the power that sportsmen would have with a license. Though just about everyone had at least agreed that any license money should go into a dedicated fund, Al Peterson, Director of Marine Fisheries in Massachusetts, threw a monkey wrench into that assumption by noting that his department has done better since the marine fuel tax was taken out of a dedicated fund and marine funding has come from the legislature.

Symposium summarizer, Boyd Pfeiffer (Maryland outdoor writer) stated his strong approval of marine licensing, but also emphasized that he respected Lou Rodia's position and was hopeful that this issue wouldn't divide the efforts of all recreational fishermen to improve the fisheries. That feeling pretty much summed up the attitude of the majority. The individuals attending this Symposium are fully aware of the need for research and most feel that a license is the logical way to raise the funds needed. Unfortunately, the "average" fisherman was not represented at this meeting (except, perhaps, by Lou Rodia in his unofficial comments), and the public support necessary for a license will not be forthcoming until the fishing public is really convinced of the need for it. In my opinion, for better or worse, the need for research is never going to sell a license. Fishery managers will have to decide just what kind of preferential treatment they're going to extend to the people who'll be paying the bills before the man on the dock is going to concede that his $5 or $10 will be well spent. Until fishery managers are ready to come up with those tangible benefits, the license issue will probably remain nothing but a subject for endless debating in our area.



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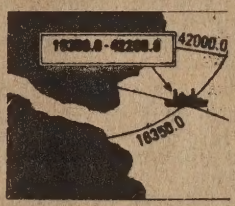

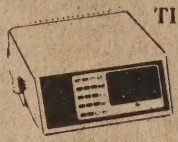

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SIGN OF A GOOD FISHERMAN

FISH TALK
with Dr. William A. Muller

DOC GRELL VS. THE WEAKFISH

ONE THING FOR SURE: Doc Grell knows the Great South Bay inside and out! I don't mean that he knows where to find weakfish, or that he even knows where and when to find any fish—although he does! No, he knows the Bay as a scientist, a diver, a fisherman, a navigator, and a resident. He also has a great sense of humor—something that other writers have omitted from his dossier and every trip that I make with him is filled with belly-laughs as well as serious fishing. Not that we have fished together all that often, what with me being basically a surf fisherman and he glued to the seat of a runabout. Still, we have gotten out on a few occasions and the most notable was an early summer morning trip in which we seduced a number of outrageously large weakfish with large bunker. That's another type of fishing and not what we did yesterday. Although this column will appear the third week in May, the trip I'm talking about was made during the first week in May. The water and the afternoon air was icy and neither of us expected a weakfish bonanza, but we thought that a search and research mission was in order before the run truly began. That's always a good idea and it's a practice that Grell follows religiously and one of many reasons why he succeeds where other fails.

EARLY REPORTS ARE GOOD! The signs are there for a good run. Out East, Captain Marty told me of early catches as large as thirty-two fish and of the presence of a significant number of one to three pound fish which is, of course, the sport of the future. In the Great South Bay, the reports were spotty—which is a way of saying that if you are in the right place at the right time you caught plenty; but if you weren't you caught zip. Well, Grell and I weren't in the right place at the right time and we got zip, which is okay because we had a thoroughly delightful afternoon on the water, plenty of chuckles, and lots of research. By the time this story appears, I trust that the run will have built into something special and that Grell and I will have made another and yet more successful trip. We have made the plans and wait only for time, tide, and season to come together in just the right mix.

WE HEADED OUT ON THE INCOMING TIDE, which Einar prefers—and with good reason; but, of course, we learned later in the day that there had been very good weakfishing in the early morning hours on the incoming tide. Well, we had the right tide, but not the right time of day. These things happen! In all fairness to Grell, I talked him into going. Early in the season I'm always the eager-beaver and I seem to talk him into one, **too**-early trip each season. But he's a good sport about it and never complains. We headed out of Islip and worked our way through the channels and cuts, casting here and casting there searching every nook-and-cranny that he knows of, looking for weakfish. Boy, does he know nooks-and-crannies! I sometimes think that I could spend a month out on the Bay with him and we still wouldn't have tried every spot that he knows.

EACH TRIP IS DIFFERENT, YET SOMEHOW SIMILAR. We kid each other good-naturedly hours on end. Of course, by now everybody knows that I referred to him as "my favorite lunatic" in an article that appeared in the Salt Water Sportsman a few years ago, and he really is. Still, I love his zaniness because it's honest, youthful, and healthy. I always kid him about his Bagley lures. Good grief, he's a walking tackle store for those shrimp, worms, and other debris. That's not fair. He scores with those lures because they're good and he should have confidence in them. Gee, if I had a world's record fish on a hair comb fitted with a hook, I'd use it all the time. For my part, I always push the Tri-Fin Lures in front of his face along with some new shaped spoons from Eppinger (Daredevle) that have proven their worth with weaks and blues. "Here's what you should be using," I tell him, as I push a Tri-Fin Jig-N-Tails under his puss. He responds, "Fish don't want hair; they want plastic. Everybody knows that." With a flourish he lifts a half-ounce orange colored Bagley shrimp above his head. I then reach into my tackle box and pull out a long thin and hot pink version of the Daredevle, called a Seadevil, that is a great imitation for a sand eel and remind him that, "weaks want this hot pink color—not orange marmalade. Here, put this on and you'll finally catch something."

SO IT GOES; hour after hour of good-natured kidding, fresh air, and peace of mind. Hours spent on the water with a nice man and a great fisherman.

THERE'S STILL A FEW FISHERMEN CHASING THE ELUSIVE FLOUNDER. Salvatore Bagnara of West Hempstead recently wrote in with a suggestion that should improve many flounder catches. "You are right about fishing with mussels and worms, but what about the sinkers we use. Did you ever come to think that they may be more than sinkers. What I mean is, PAINT THEM YELLOW. I've been doing this for about two years and find it very effective with flounder and fluke. It's just like having mussels and it draws them to the baited hooks. So give it a try; what could it hurt?" Thanks Sal, but we've been wise to that trick for about twelve years now and we agree: it works. We've tested it out in water that was so clear that you could see the flounder swimming on the bottom. When you bounce a yellow sinker the flounder will first rush over to the bright yellow hunk of lead before realizing that it's fake. Then when they turn to feed they find the mussel baited hooks and—whammo, you're in business. We thank you for writing in to remind our readers and me about the technique because it's been a long time since we mentioned it and there may be many of our readers who are interested in trying it. What color do you use Sal, since there are many shades of yellow? We use school-bus yellow and find it to be the best where we fish, although in other locales I have seen bright orange, dull yellow,and red work very well, too.

SOME YEARS BACK, we gave Scott Simons, our Managing Editor a few laughs. I guess it goes back more than just a few years because I was just getting to know Scott and, in fact, I was just starting my relationship with The Fisherman. (Time do fly!) Anyway, I met Scott one early April morning and I had promised to show him about Peconic Bay which is my backyard. When we arrived on the grounds, I took out a few bright yellow sinkers and Scott laughed. "What are you going to use those for—decorating a Christmas Tree?" Now, lest this little incident makes Scott out to be an ignorant fisherman, let me explain. First of all, Scott is used to Montauk and when Montauk flounder are "in," you don't need a yellow sinker. Out at Montauk, the good fisherman is more concerned with shore ranges, correct tides and winds, proper cutting and threading of the bait on the hook, and correct chumming methods. Rightfully so, since these are the ingredients that one needs to score at Montauk. Each place is unique unto itself. So, Scott executes the above items to perfection which is why he is able to consistently catch fish of many species. Where many Montauk types are either bass experts or bluefish experts, Scott does it with flounder, blackfish, porgies, sea bass, striped bass, fluke, bluefish, weakfish, cod,

pollack—have I left anything out? Very impressive. I did convince Scott how valuable yellow painted sinkers can be in the shallow waters of Great South Bay and on Peconic's usually hard bottom.

CHARLES WANDERER WRITES. "HELP! In Your April 12 issue, Ron Onorato states that flounder don't winter in the bays but move in and out twice a year to the ocean. I think that you, on the other hand, suggest that flounder do winter over. What, then, are the flounder that Great South Bay clam diggers bring up in their tongs and how many times do you hear the remark, 'you can take flounder all winter long in the bays and creeks.' When Ron Onorato says that the majority of fishermen believe that there is a resident population of flounder in the bays, he isn't kidding." I don't wish to presume to speak for Ron, but I think that I have a good idea of what he had in mind when he wrote that. He didn't mean all flounder—he meant most flounder and he's right. There is a resident winter population that comes into the bays in the fall and stays put when winter grabs hold. However, the overwhelming masses of flounder swim out onto the Continental Shelf. The number of flounder that stay over in the bays and creeks varies from place to place and is very dependent upon the depth of the water, the amount of food available, and the type of bottom. If the mud is clean and thick, they can dig in when it gets really cold and thus survive temperature extremes and that's really the best type of bottom for them. Sure, some hardy fishermen can catch a few flounder during a mild spell of weather, but the size of their catch is rarely of bonanza size. Typically, the fish are thin and rather small compared to what may be available in late March and April. But it's kind of nice to get out on the water after being kept indoors for awhile. Remember, if you get the desire to try this out next winter, that even calm and relatively mild winter days can be brutal. It's definitely not a sport for the thin-blooded, but you can catch a meal here and there. It is also not unusual to get skunked many times. A mild morning can turn into a frigid afternoon in January and a wind can come out of nowhere. Bait may be hard to come by too, so that the fisherman who plans to try in the dead of winter usually stores a supply of bait in the refrigerator in the fall to facilitate the fishing. If you are intent upon trying this next winter, fish deep holes in otherwise shallow areas of the bay where the bottom is covered with thick mud. Keep the bait moving because the flounder will rarely come out of the mud to chase a bait or respond to chum. Hopefully, by keeping the bait moving, sooner or later you'll drag it past the nose of a sleeping flounder. Good luck and let us know how you do.

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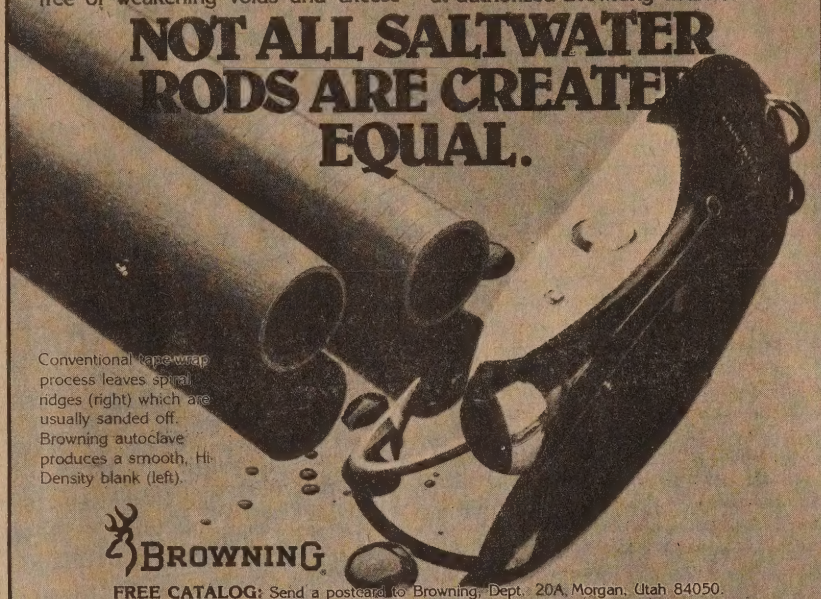

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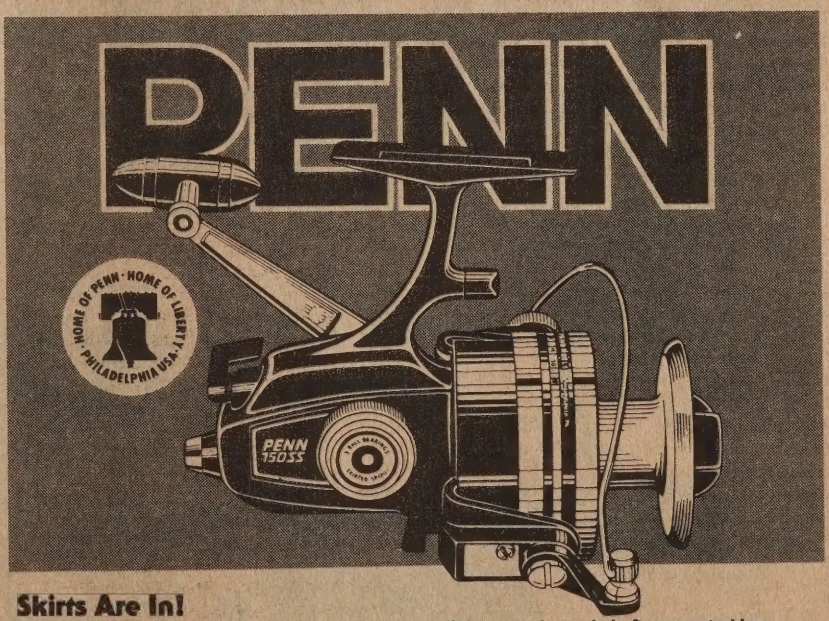

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THE CAPTAIN'S TABLE
...From the Godfather's Cookbook
with Eileen Regina

FISH STEW CREOLE

Well, I finally got Andy weaned away from writing all those Italian fish recipes—for one time anyway; so what does he do but lay the blame on me for interfering. This is par for the course at the Regina nut factory anyway, 'cause I always get blamed one way or another, when all I ever try to do is be helpful. If Andy ever listens to my advice, and things do not work out according to plan, I never hear the end of it; whereas if everything works well, he always takes all the credit.

The various fish and seafood recipes I prepare are not necessarily always Italian in origin, but to keep Chubby happy and quiet his constant complaining, I usually throw in a tomato or two, or perhaps a hot pepper, and tell him it's an Italian dish whose recipe I got from his mother. That gets him every time. It isn't only the tomator or the hot pepper that does the trick: the clincher is "Mom." He thinks that if his mother makes it, it must be good and automatically Italian; but believe me when I say that it ain't necessarily so!

His mom is a swell person, and truly a great cook, but being married to his dad for fifty years has taught her to be stoically devious, keeping both him and his dad happy while still doing things her own way—especially in her kitchen, which is her undisputed domain. If mom can get by for fifty years merely by adding a tomato or hot pepper to her cooking, my twenty-five years with Jumbo is child's play by comparison.

Andy's dad is the typical old-fashioned Italian male, bred to believe in the Supreme Divine Rights of all Italian males: that they are undisputed "bosses" of their households, ruling with iron fists and heads to match! And like countless ages of Italian women, mom lets dad go on believing this while she does whatever she wants to do anyway, whenever she wants to do it. As long as our guys think that they're our lord and master, it doesn't hurt to let them go on believing it, although it isn't so ... which keeps them happy ... which keeps us happy!

Today's recipe comes from Andy's mom, and is one that father and son have eaten and enjoyed for years, believing that it originated in Italy. Actually, it comes from our own Cajun country—Louisiana—where some of the greatest seafood in the world is prepared. By simply dropping the addition of okra in the recipe, it no longer is truly a Creole dish, but for all intents and purposes I still call it Creole Fish Stew.

* * * * *

Creole Fish Stew

Ingredients (Serves 4.)

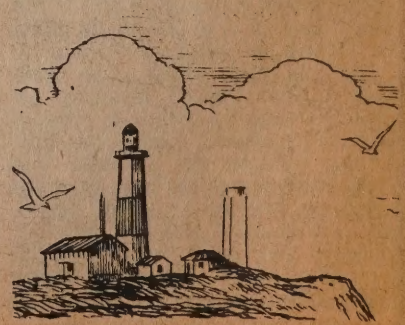
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 large rib of celery, green leaves attached, chopped
1 large carrot, peeled & sliced
2 medium potatoes, peeled & diced
1 can tomatoes (28 oz.)
1 tsp. table salt
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
1/4 tsp. hot red pepper sauce
3 cups water
1 - 1 lb. pkg. frozen perch fillets
1/2 green pepper, diced.

In a large heavy skillet, heat the oil. I have heavy cast iron skillets that I love, and they have served me faithfully from the time we first got married, a quarter of a century ago. When the oil is heated, add the onion, celery and carrot, and saute for five minutes, or until the onion becomes soft. Add the potatoes and tomatoes, breaking up the large pieces of tomato with a spoon; add the salt, pepper, hot pepper sauce, and the three cups of water. Heat to boiling, then lower heat and cover skillet, allowing contents to simmer for fifteen minutes. As this simmers, take a sharp, heavy knife and cut the frozen fish fillets into one-inch cubes. Here you might better use a serrated edge knife as a saw if you cannot cut the frozen fish easily otherwise. Add the cubed fish and the green pepper to the skillet, and continue cooking for about five more minutes, or until the fish is snowy white. Serve with cornbread squares and a cold tossed salad of chicory, escarole, and Romaine lettuce, and top it off with a chilled white wine, such as Andean Chardonnay '76, which is an excellent wine from Argentina.

Like Andy, to be perfectly honest about it, I feel that fresh caught fish taste better too, although frozen fillets are real good. Now if I can get him to get up off his fat bottom and go out and catch a few flounder, I'll use those fillets next week to make him one of his favorite dishes, "just like Momma used to make!"

* * * * *

I'd like to thank all our readers who sent me those questions, and hope that each has been answered satisfactorily. If anyone else out there has any questions that I might be able to help with, simply contact me at The Fisherman office, and they'll see to it that your queries are forwarded to me posthaste.



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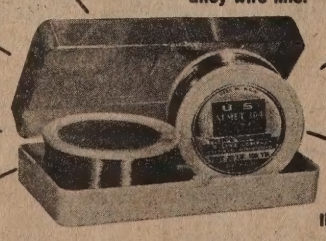

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THE FISHERMAN QUIZ

ANSWERS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE.

BY FRED GUARDINEER

1 THE ATLANTIC WHITE MARLIN (75 LBS.) IS SMALLER AND LIVELIER THAN STRIPED OR BLUE MARLIN. WHAT ELSE IS DIFFERENT FOR IDENTIFICATION?

2 WHEN FISHING FOR DOLPHIN AND YOU SPOT A FLOATING SEA TURTLE, YOU SHOULD CAST YOUR LURE NEAR IT BECAUSE DOLPHINS OFTEN DRIFT UNDERNEATH TURTLES.

TRUE ☐
FALSE ☐

3 THIS SIMPLE KNOT IS USEFUL FOR JOINING ENDS OF DIFFERENT DIAMETERS. IT IS THE

SQUARE KNOT ☐ CLOVE KNOT ☐
SHEET BEND ☐

4 BASS COLORING IS ONLY SKIN DEEP. AS A RESULT, BASS IN MUDDY WATER ARE LIGHTER IN COLOR DUE TO MUCH LESS LIGHT FILTERING THROUGH THE WATER—AND THOSE TAKEN IN CLEAR WATER ARE DARKER.

TRUE ☐
FALSE ☐

5 NORTHERN PIKE ATTAIN A SPEED OF

15 MPH ☐
20 MPH ☐
30 MPH ☐

6 WHAT ARE "PHEREMONES" AND WHAT DO THEY DO FOR FISH, A FISH MAVEN ASKS?

1-THE UNDERSIDE IS WITHOUT STRIPES. 2-TRUE. 3-SHEET BEND. 4-TRUE. 5-20 MPH. 6-PHEREMONES ARE A CHEMICAL SUBSTANCE RELEASED BY ANIMALS TO CREATE A RESPONSE FROM OTHER ANIMALS. FISH RELEASE ALARM PHEREMONES WHEN ENDANGERED, WARNING OTHER FISH. SOME YOUNG FISH RELEASE PHEREMONES TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES TO THEIR PARENTS.

Sinker Bouncing

with Matt Ahern

FLUKE FISHING

PART ONE

I have yet to meet a sinker bouncer who failed to have an intense interest in fluke. The reasons for this are easy to understand. Few of our bottom feeders offer such inducement as size and ease of availability as do fluke. Fortunately for us fellows, fluke are within reach of all who dunk bait. You can try your luck aboard a party boat, charter craft, rental skiff, or private boat. If these do not appeal, it is a simple matter to test your skill from shore. That's the nice thing about fluke: no matter where you fish along the South Shore of Long Island and the coast of New Jersey, there's an excellent chance of scoring. Water depths mean nothing; I've caught six pounders in as little as one foot of water, as well as in depths to one hundred feet—sometimes more. In this respect, fluke are like gold: they are where you find them. Experienced fluke fishermen have always known this, of course; and you will find these fellows not as interested in locating fluke as they are in how to get that thin, curved bit of steel where it will do the most good. Fluke fishing is one aspect of our sport that lends itself to much experimentation. In fact, I don't believe it would be wrong to say that the best fluke fishermen are those who do the most experimenting. Certainly, all those crackerjack fishermen I've known throughout my angling career have always been in this category.

Naturally, through association, I fell victim to this highly contagious characteristic. I caught the bug, too. Truly, I would be sore put to recall any fluke fishing day when I did not devote some time to experimentation—even when the fishing was good and to do so was actually unnecessary.

Most times these experiments brought me nothing but the knowledge that such outlandish methods I fell heir to were nothing more than a waste of time. But then, there have been occasions when they paid off handsomely.

I've tried four-foot fluke leaders around the offshore wrecks during late summer and early fall and succeeded in landing many a fine doormat. On slow days, I've cheerfully shrugged off the jibes of fishing buddies and tried light, short-shanked 1/0 Sproat hooks in place of the heavy 4/0 or 5/0 long-shanked Carlisles being used and—surprise, surprise, knocked the fish dead.

I've tried three-foot jigging sweeps of the rod tip in fast currents, and two inch, feather-like lifts on those days when the tide barely moved and succeeded in driving nearby fishermen to distraction. Not every time, of course; sometimes they drove me to distraction.

I've tried combination baits until I was blue in the face and the results were terrible. I've tried those identical combos the following day, and by anchoring and casting around the boat, succeeded in nailing fish after fish without strain or pain. When anchored, I've discovered it sometimes pays to fish a dead line with a tail-hooked, oversized live killy and let the fluke do its own finding. And I've also found that one inch killies reeled slowly across the bottom will often outfish all other fluke baits.

You can bet I've tried just about anything and everything that popped into my hopelessly fish-oriented brain. Most, of course, didn't work; but that meant nothing—and it still means nothing because I'm always open for suggestion.

One of the fish-producing experiments I tried a few years ago was an enlightenment. It was an attempt to catch fluke at night.

Like most fishermen, I'd been told that fluke (and flounder) do not feed during the dark hours; for awhile I believed it. Then one day this thought occurred to me: suppose all these fellows were wrong? Was I actually missing out on a fishing opportunity? Perhaps, if given the chance, fluke really would feed at night if conditions were right. What would happen if bait and some form of artificial light were available? I mulled it over and decided to give it a whirl. Surely, I had nothing to lose and everything to gain.

In this experiment I was most fortunate. What local body of water was more brightly lighted during the dark hours than the area surrounded by the Shinnecock Canal locks? Over the years, I'd done plenty of night weakfishing there and knew that the many huge lights provided the closest thing to daylight I'd seen on inland waters.

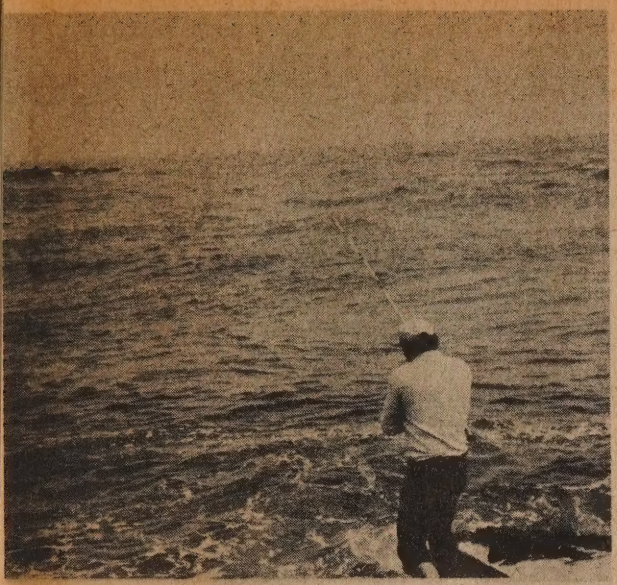
I didn't know for sure how far artificial light would penetrate through twenty feet of water; therefore, it was imperative I use the whitest bait available. I settled for fresh squid, checked the tide table, and took off about two in the morning.

I caught four fluke that first night—the largest about three pounds. The next night I did even better, nailing five. And so it went during those weeks weather and tidal conditions allowed me to fish. My best single catch that summer was nine fluke; most trips averaged four. I found, too, that when I could fish through the night until dawn, I always experienced a lull just before that time; and when the fish did begin to bite again, none were as big as the largest night-caught fish. And will wonders never cease—I never caught one throwback at night ... and still haven't!

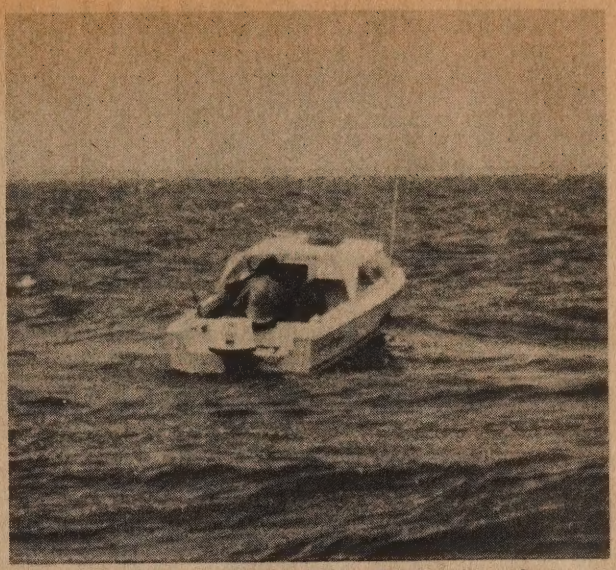
But all good things must come to an end. Came the energy crunch and the amount of light at the locks was reduced by at least fifty percent. I tried several times after that, but never had one hit. But I hated to give up. I gave it some thought and decided that a foggy night might be cause to increase the lighting that necessary fifty percent; I figured boat traffic had to find the locks and also be aware of their position in the Canal during foggy nights.

I bided my time until one night in early June last year when conditions were right, and tried again. Success. It was like before the energy crunch. Bright lights and wet fog mingled to cast the necessary white

Shinnecock Canal nighttime fluke.



Ocean inlets offer good fluke fishing.



When fishing open bay areas for fluke, keep at least a thousand feet from shore.

glow over the water.

I made a cast, reeled the squid slowly over the bottom and came up with a sea robin. The next few casts produced nothing. Then I had a hit and missed setting the hook. The retrieve was evidently too fast. Another cast to the same spot produced my first fluke—a two pounder.

Within the next hour, a flurry of sea robins and a one pound throwback weakfish attacked the squid strips. Then came one more fluke—another two pounder. It was after that when the fishing came to a halt. Not even a sea robin. But just minutes before the locks cracked open, I nailed the largest fluke of the night—a little less than four pounds. And that was it. I had fished two hours and had taken three nice fluke. (See photo.)

I relate all this in detail to show to what extent dedicated fishermen will go in order to bring home the fish. (Incidentally, I have also caught fall flounder in the Canal under the same lighting conditions.) From then on, I've taken no one's word for anything when it comes to fishing. It is always best to remember that no man knows all there is to know about fishing—nor will he ever know. This, to me, is the challenge that makes fishing so interesting.

When you believe you have a sensible reason for experimenting—do it! So what if it doesn't work. Don't let it throw you. You'll be a better fisherman for the effort, regardless of the result. Experimentation forces you to think, and nothing puts fish in the bucket like intelligent thought.

But enough about experimentation. Anyway, before you can do this, there must be a solid fishing foundation on which to base your experiments; else how can you hope to succeed? So let's first go about catching a few fluke.

If you are on your own, regardless if you are boat fishing or taking your chances from shore, the best advice I can give is this: you've got to hunt the fish. Fluke are predators; they hunt, and you must do the same to be successful.

There is no guarantee that because fluke fishing is known to be good in one area it will be that way when you get there. It is quite possible that the fish will have moved; not too far, perhaps, but far enough so that you have your work cut out for you. The explanation for this is simple. Baitfish move constantly throughout good fishing areas; they have to because the predators put pressure on them, and when they do, you may be sure fluke will be right behind.

When shore fishing in areas known to produce good fluke action (inlets, and so forth), never hesitate to move if your results are less than expected. Sometimes a move of only fifty feet makes all the difference. If you meet with success in your new location, don't become over-confident. When the fish quit, move again. This is my tried and proven method of catching fluke from shore. It works remarkably well. If you insist upon staying in one place, you have only yourself to blame if you fare poorly in a good fishing area.

Proper bait presentation is the key to successful fluke fishing. You've got to make that bait come alive—especially is this so when using such enticers as squid, sea robin strips, spearing, and the like. This means imparting plenty of action with the rod, using lifts of at least one foot. When using live killies, you can slow down on the retrieve, but you still must apply movement to cover ground. Except under special conditions, few fluke are caught on dead lines.

When boat fishing, drifting is, of course, most important. But there are days when weather and/or tidal conditions prevent proper drifting. It is then when anchoring in narrow creeks, at the end of submerged sand bars (the down-side), and along the edges of channels, pays off.

It is also necessary under these conditions to do your share of casting around the anchored area, and to also use plenty of action on the retrieve—especially during those slack-water periods when many fishermen will tell you fluke won't bite. They will—providing you jig straight up and down alongside the boat, using steep, three-foot lifts of the rod. Before leaving any anchored spot, work each foot of bottom thoroughly. If you catch one fluke, stick it out—there are more nearby.

Of course, if you are party or charter boat fishing, you have nothing to worry about as far as finding fish is concerned. But you will have plenty of other things to concern you: competition from the other fishermen, for one.

But don't let that bother you. Keep your cool, as the kids say. Don't become discouraged ... ever! And by all means, have confidence in your fishing ability. Believe it or not, but this has a psychological effect. Should you feel those other fishermen on board are better at the game than you, then they most certainly will be as far as your results are concerned. I have never seen it any other way.

An old-timer once told me that a good fisherman is nothing more than an angler who has learned to apply a monumental ego to the end of a fishing rod. Whether this is so, I don't know; but I sometimes suspect it is. I do know, however, that without self-confidence in your ability to produce fish, few will be your reward. It's as simple as that.

Next week we'll get into bait and tackle.

INSHORE FISHING

with Fred Golofaro

SKINNY WATER WEAKS

The outboard-powered skiff drifted lazily over the sand-covered bottom as the midday sun beat a soothing warmth on my body. I stood atop the forward casting platform armed with a light spinning rod. A quarter ounce white bucktail dangled at the ready as I peered through a pair of Polaroid sunglasses, scanning the surface for any sign of a disturbance. Sound like a familiar scene? The Florida Keys, bonefish, tarpon? How about Great South Bay and northern weakfish? The South Bay's shallow flats offer Long Island anglers a unique opportunity to present lures to a worthy game fish in surroundings more typical of a tropical flat. Beckoning is the excitement of spotting your quarry and the satisfaction of a well-placed cast resulting in a hookup. Many anglers are aware that great numbers of tiderunner weaks move into the two to four foot shallows of the Bay as the urge to spawn is triggered by rising water temperatures. The yellowfins can be observed in pods of five to fifteen fish, cavorting on the surface in what apparently is a spawning ritual. Despite some people's beliefs, these fish can indeed be caught at this time. This is not to say that whenever the pods of weaks are up, you will catch fish. I've spent countless days on these flats since the weakfish resurgence some ten years ago and have experienced days when nearly every cast resulted in a hookup. Other times, despite being surrounded by pods of weaks, I've had only fair success. There have also been days when, with fish thick all around me, cast after cast drew nary a bump. Do not be misled by anyone telling you these fish cannot be caught under these circumstances. Many fishermen are deceived because they expect that any time you find yourself surrounded by fish rolling around on the surface, you should be able to catch them. They lose sight of the fact that these fish are not on the surface tearing into schools of hapless bait fish, but rather their surface antics are the result of nature's urge to reproduce. It is believed by some, that weakfish will not feed when spawning. If such is the case, then possibly the fish that do hit are not actually engaged in the physical act of spawning. Or, perhaps, at this time the fish strike a lure because they see it as an intruder. The truth of the matter remains to be seen. Yet when conditions are right, whether it be factors concerning water temperature, tide, or wind, these fish can be caught! I have heard too many people say that you absolutely cannot catch weakfish during this time. Nuts to them, and the gill netter who suggested I get lost because "you won't catch any of these fish now." Had our discussion been a bit more amiable, I would have invited him over to inspect my fish box. Enough on the subject. They absolutely can be caught.

One of the nicest aspects of flats fishing is that you can go as light as you wish in the tackle department and still handle any weak that comes along. Ultra-light spinning rods weighing less than three ounces and matched with reels loaded with four or six pound test provide great sport. Due to the shallowness of the flats, an eight or ten pound yellowfin will run a surprising amount of line. Keep your drag set properly; be patient and enjoy.

Lure selection is a matter of choice, but I have had the most success with white bucktails in the quarter to one-half ounce size range. The lure best imitates the grass shrimp which constitute such a large part of the species diet. Fish it plain; no squid or pork rind in this situation. Jelly worms rigged on small lead-heads produce very well and the popular rubber shrimp, Rebels in the four-and-a-half inch size, and half-ounce Tri-Fin Whiptails all belong in your arsenal.

This fine weak fell to a white bucktail in less than three feet of water.

Weaks hooked such as the one above can be released without removing them from the water.

All of the lures in this assortment will take weakfish on the flats when conditions are right.

While spinning gear is far and away the most popular with weakfish enthusiasts, there is a growing trend towards the long wand in the salt. I am, of course, speaking about fly rods and the new breed of anglers who find more pleasure in the challenge of taking a few game fish with this tackle rather than return to the dock with a full fish box. These skinny water tiderunners are perfect targets for the saltwater fly rod enthusiast. The shallow water really simplifies presentation and also eliminates a lot of blind casting when the fish are podding on the surface.

An eight-and-a-half to nine foot rod that will handle a #9 forward taper line is well suited to the task. Your leader tippet should be tapered down to ten or twelve pound test. A small selection of saltwater flies such as the Platinum Blonde, Honey Blonde and Phillips Shrimp tied on 1/0 hooks will suffice under most circumstances. Carry some four inch traces of leader wire along in case you happen upon bluefish, which also roam the flats.

While there are a number of shallow areas in Great South Bay that are frequented by spawning weakfish, the most consistent action can usually be found on the broad expanse of flats to the north of East and West Islands. When the fish move way up on the flats, I have witnessed them in eighteen inches of water, it is possible to leave your boat and wade. This is a decided advantage to the man with a fly rod, provided the fish are abundant. Caution should be applied lest you be surprised by one of the holes or drains which dot these flats. Due to the lack of water depth, it is not advisable for boats drawing more than two feet of water to stray very far up into the shallows. Move about slowly and if you have an outboard skiff with a small auxiliary motor, you may want to put it to use.

There have been many days when we were the only sportfishing boat for a mile or two around, while just on the other side of East Island at Ocean Beach, a huge fleet of boats drifted cheek to jowl with one another. The clincher is that many times we were catching many more fish than they—and under much more pleasant circumstances.

All is not roses on the flats, however. A growing fleet of gill netters continue to abuse this fishery. Pods of spawning weakfish are easy targets for netters who drop their nets in a circle around the schools which are sought out on the surface. It is an ugly sight and a topic which requires a great deal more space than this article allows. Just as ugly is the attitude of a select few among the net boys. While some netters can work all day and never infringe on the pleasure of sportfishermen, others find it necessary to make a habit of dropping their nets either right alongside, and sometimes around boatmen with fish on. It would not surprise me to find that the reason so few are fishing the flats is to avoid the aggravation of dealing with certain simple-minded, selfish individuals. Much of the problem is a matter of courtesy and granted, some of the sportfishermen are as discourteous and ignorant as the netters.

Despite this black cloud, many acres of flats are available to the angler seeking the challenge of the "poor man's bonefish." If you choose to release these fine game fish, it is best to avoid even removing them from the water. Simply work them alongside, reach down, and more times than not, a twist of the jig will set them free. If the fish is hooked in such a way that he must be brought aboard, he becomes destined for the dinner table.

Give flats fishing a try this spring and with a little imagination, you, too, may find yourself somewhere down in the Florida Keys.

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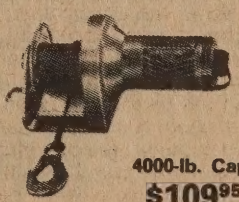

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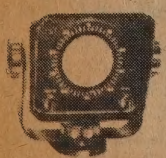

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Surf Side with John Fritz

FIRST ASSAULT

Prior to the middle of May, surf fishermen plying the outer beaches of Long Island's South Shore find little cause for excitement over the fishing prospects. Most of the weakfish action takes place on the inside. The spring run of small striped bass usually sought after by south side surfmen has not materialized for the past several years. Flounder, blackfish, possibly whiting or ling—nothing worth getting worked up for after the long winter's layoff. As the schools of mackerel passing our coast begin to decline, the pace of the local surf fishing starts to accelerate. On one hand, the larger bass start to infiltrate our area, but the species which makes its presence known by the abruptness of their impressive arrival is the bluefish. In most cases, these are not the teen-sized tackle busters encountered later in the season which, on rare occasions, will hit artificials. These early arrivals are small to medium sized blues which, while preferring a few specific lures, will most often attack just about anything cast into their midst.

On many occasions these schools will be on top, breaking the surface of the water in their fury, accompanied by their canopy of screeching terns. A sight to gladden the heart of young and old alike. At other times, diligent working of a likely area is needed to pinpoint their location.

When these fish first hit the outer beaches, they usually stay only for a day or two, then move on to settle in more preferred locations with a more reliable source of bait. To pinpoint the exact place and time of their arrival is extremely difficult, but there are clues as to when their arrival is imminent and which beaches show the most promise.

Newspaper reports on mackerel fishermen aboard the party boat fleet who unexpectedly tangle with bluefish will announce their progression northward along the Jersey shore. Reports of surf fishermen taking blues on the north Jersey coast will foretell their arrival on our shores in a matter of days. The earliest date for their arrival according to my records is May 16.

Daily scrutiny during this period, of possible waterfront locations around the hours of sunrise and sunset could reward you with a place on their welcoming committee. Most of us have to work for a living but, i convenient, a check before and/or after work of such early hotspots as Manhattan Beach, Point Lookout o Cedar Beach could put you in the right place at the right time. Knowledge of the geographical locations of the above sites indicate that when the bluefish make their initial appearance they seem to prefer beaches to the west and in close proximity to the major South Shore inlets. North shore residents should not feel left out, for they can keep watch on Mt. Sinai, Sunken Meadow Makamah or Bayville which have produced bluefish during the latter part of May in years past.

For most of the above beaches a beach buggy is not necessary: a run into the parking lot, a quick look along the shore line for activity, and you can be on your way. Of course, if you have the inclination, a more certain method to check out an area is to get out and work it over with a variety of lures.

Within a day or so of their return, these blues tend to settle in waters affected by the inlets. Sometimes they can be seen working the bait as it is washed along by the current; at other times taking up their station in a rip waiting for the bait to be flushed to them. On many occasions there is no discernible sign while these fish lie out of the main current flow picking on the bait as it passes by. These rips can be worked by casting small tins upstream and letting it sink towards the bottom before starting your retrieve.

When surface activity is detected, small chrome popping plugs similar to Cordell's Near Nuthin' or small, white pencil poppers will allow you to enjoy smashing strikes reminiscent of last year's fall run. If the top water action subsides and the fish seemingly disappear, try changing to a lure that will work below the surface. Start with either a tin or a swimming plug and progress downward until you cover all levels to the bottom. No results? No, don't leave just yet. If you still have tide, take a break. Have a beer or clean the fish you have already caught, but wait around for awhile. These fish are very likely to reappear in the same location.

Although these blues are likely to be on the small side, probably one to five pounds, exciting sport can be had if the tackle used is scaled down as much as possible. Naturally, when long casts are required or when fishing from a jetty into a strong rip, light tackle is not feasible. In places such as the back side of Democrat or on the North Shore beaches, light, one-handed sticks are possible if the fish are relatively close to the beach. Most often a nine foot medium action rod coupled with a reel similar to the Penn 710 and spooled with ten pound

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When the blues make their first surge into the surf, anglers flock to the beach to cash in.

test line will prove to be the most advantageous combination. When using the lighter tackle, you will not be able to horse these fish in; therefore, wire leaders should be used to cut down on the number of lures bitten off.

Once these blues settle into the inlets, day to day action can be looked for, barring any major storms. An angler should be aware that if a specific stage of the tide is productive, approximately one hour must be added each day to allow for the natural progression of the tides. Since the ebbing tide is more often the most productive, special attention should be placed on frequenting the inlets at this state of the tide. One should keep in mind that times of high water and the start of the ebb tide, can vary by as much as several hours. Because the surfman is more interested in the current, knowledge of this occurrence is of prime importance. Charts designating the current flow are available at some of our local tackle stores. If you are unable to obtain such a chart, a reckoning of one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hours after the stated time of high tide should put you within a working range of the conditions you seek.

Occasionally these bluefish will run the beach, much to the annoyance of bait fishermen seeking cow bass. The light tapping of the rod tip when the smaller blues feed with impunity upon chunks of mackerel or bunker-hiding 6/0 hooks is a source of concern, for they will readily decimate a supply of bait, while only the more foolish will be caught. On the other hand, if an angler reduces the size of the hook and cuts his bait into smaller pieces, something can be saved from a losing situation. These small blues can be hooked and the angler still has some chance of attracting a passing striper.

A month later into the season, this hard-fighting fish is once again the object of curses when surfmen quietly fishing Rebels and RedFin swimming plugs seeking weaks or bass are interrupted by these aggressive blues. Again, the angler should be thankful for what he has, for this action is better than no action at all and these smaller bluefish are the best tasting of the bluefish clan.

Although described by some as blue devils, the appearance of this last arriving game fish species in the Long Island surf fits the final piece in place for the coming season. With the decline of striped bass in our area the bluefish, coupled with the resurgent weakfish, are the two basic game fish available to the surfman. Although the bass and weaks are the glamor fish, pound for pound a bluefish will outfight either of these species. Whether you welcome their arrival or not, bluefish are an important part of the Long Island surf scene. A species which would be sorely missed by all if they were absent from our waters.

LOCATING INSHORE GAME FISH

by Andy Regina

Our prolific inshore waters attract a great variety of game fish, and sport fishermen seek striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish via many methods—either from shore or from boats. The confirmed surf nut is strictly a beach rat, preferring to keep his or her feet on solid ground, and content to hunt for any game fish that might venture within range of their long rods. Boatmen either drift or fish at anchor, casting lures or fishing with bait, or troll bait or lures at various depths as they pursue these same game fish.

The method selected by each individual is personal, usually dictated by economic means or ready availability, and often influenced by each indvidual's familiarity with one particular type of tackle. Regardless of your favored method of fishing, there are definite axioms that may increase your chances for success—the prime axiom being knowing how to locate game fish. Without this knowledge, you might just as well take up bowling, 'cause you just ain't gonna catch any fish!

These inshore waters are called bays and estuaries, and are fairly shallow local waters that attract game fish for many reasons. Some fish find these brackish waters to their liking; while others take advantage of the fact that shallow waters often become warmer more quickly in the spring. These inshore waters are also protected from the storms and pounding waves that often occur out at sea, which makes them ideal nurseries for the many small fish and crustaceans that make up the bulk of game fish diets.

Merely knowing where game fish might be is only half the battle; knowing how to locate them in these areas is the other half. We have two means to do so: either by reading visual signs or by fishing known productive areas. Both means are fairly obvious—but let us refresh our memories.

The most obvious visual sign to look for is birds. Whenever bait fish are pushed to the surface or boil up wounded from the deep by feeding game fish, you can bet your bottom dollar that sea birds will gather in a hurry. Alert fishermen who follow closely behind should do well: if bait fish appear to have been frightened to the surface, fish shallow. If the baits boils up wounded, fish deep. Popping plugs and shallow swimmer should work well on top, and you can't beat a diamond jig for deep water.

If you see bait fish shower into the air, get there fast and start fishing quickly, 'cause that bait isn't leaping out of the water just for the exercise. They're trying to escape from danger—usually active predators feeding below—and can't go anywhere safely but up. Here, too, those same plugs should work well, or maybe even a jig that might more closely match the hatch, such as a Tri-Fin Sand Eel. The plastic-tail jig should also be deadly under these circumstances, as might a bucktail jig, allowed to settle to the bottom and then retrieved rapidly to the surface. If you use the bucktail, don't forget to add pork rind to the hook—at times it can mean the difference between success and failure.

When the water is calm, especially early in the morning or in the evening, you may often see boils on the surface. This means that a fish has just taken some bait right below the surface. Usually the largest swirls are created by the largest fish; so cast that plug to the largest swirl of all and hang onto your rod as you retrieve it. A plastic-tail jig would also be a good choice here, especially if the game fish are weakfish. You can tell what game fish are feeding by the swirls they make. Bluefish usually leap right out of the water, and stripers make a U-turn right below the surface, which causes that swirl. Weakfish make that same U-turn, but usually break the surface with a lazy flap of the tail, unlike bass. Fish that plastic tail jig back to you right under the surface, with slow, sweeping retrieves.

Densely-packed bait fish can discolor the water and cause ripples or moving patches on the surface, as can schooled game fish. Calm, cloudy days, or the half-light of dawn and dusk is a prime time to spot this discoloration or minor disturbances. If you determine that this is bait—fish fairly deep, for game fish could be below, stalking the school. If it is game fish just below the surface, try fishing any surface lure back to you with a fast retrieve.

The final visual sign is so obvious

Sometimes we overlook the obvious, at times it might pay to fish with the local fleet.

that it is often overlooked, and that is watching the other boats. Anglers who fish any area on a regular basis either know where the fish are, or where they should be. Although we hate to follow the fleet, at times it can pay off—especially if you are new to that particular area. The fleet will not begrudge your presence if you show common courtesy. Do not steam through them at full throttle, make as little disturbance as possible if anchoring, and do not crowd too close. If the fleet is in a trolling pattern, take your place at the end of the line and maintain their speed and pattern.

Beach rats often encounter a similar situation where many anglers may be restricted to one tight productive spot. They form a picket line, and you must take your place at the end of that line, moving up towards that productive point by stages as each angler ahead keeps moving ahead until it is your turn to reach that spot, get a cast off, then move on—either down the beach to fight your fish or back to the end of the line again to await another chance. Here again, nobody complains and everyone is welcome to a fair shot at the fish; but you must be fair and play the game by their rules.

Visual signs are not the only ways to find game fish, and when you can't spot 'em you look for game fish in areas that are known to hold them. Inshore waters offer many such areas for many reasons, which could include advantageous ambush points, good bait-holding structure, or availability to game fish traveling routes.

Fish in narrow stretches of water: currents are faster where the water gets funneled into a tight pinch, digging deep channels that offer greater protection to game fish. These same channels will concentrate any bait passing through into a narrower, much easier-to-get-at-area. The one exception to fishing narrows might be at still water, when currents are at a bare standstill.

Bridges, piers, and pilings provide food and shelter for crabs, shrimp, and bait fish, and create protective eddies for them when current runs strong. Barnacles and mussels that grow on these structures provide food that the bait feeds on, and the weed growth offers them protection. Game fish generally lurk on the outskirts of the eddies, feeding on the bait that gets swept into the current. Anchor off these structures and fish by casting towards them and retrieving your lures back towards your boat.

Channels are also prime game fish areas. Predators follow channels in and out with the tides, taking advantage of the deep water. While it is illegal to tie up directly to buoys and channel markers, or to stay within the channel to fish, you can always anchor nearby and cast into their depths, or drift along the edges. At any rate, it is definitely worth a good try, and should be on your must-fish list.

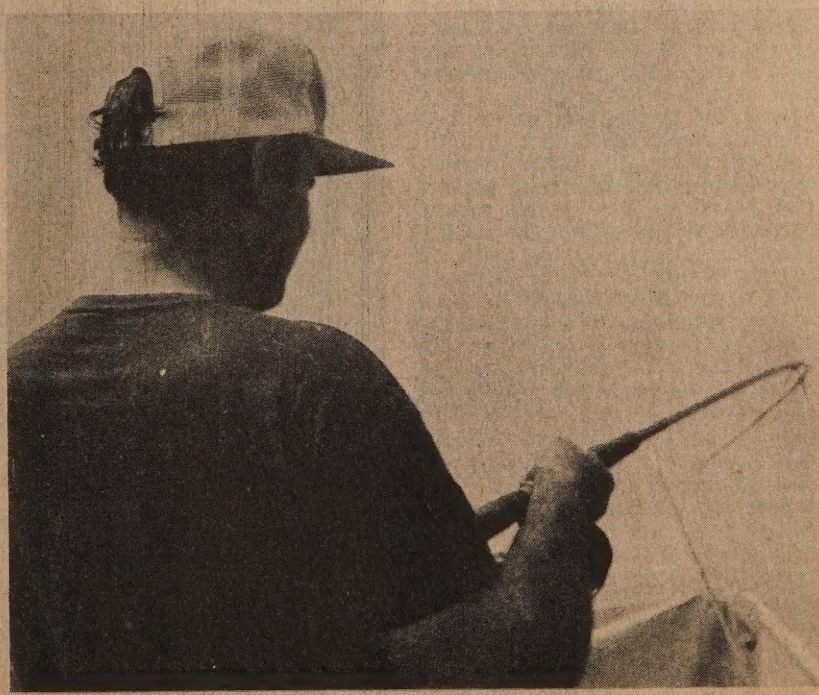
Brackish ponds offer another good game fish potential. Although these ponds may not hold any significant amount of sizable game fish, they are our saltwater nurseries, harboring bait as well as game fish fry, and a lot of school-sized fish at times. Fish the mouths of these ponds, where they empty into the bay or ocean. You can expect game fish to be positioned outside these mouths, waiting for easy pickin's, especially when bait is flushed seaward by an outgoing tide.

Backwaters are areas where tidal currents flow completely opposite to the main current, as often happens for short distances, just below obstructions or sharp points. When this occurs, natural foods tend to drop down to the bottom, inviting game fish to gather for free lunch. The main thing to remember here is that the bait is on the bottom, which means that game fish will be on bottom, too. Fish on bottom also, using natural baits such as seaworms, clams, or bait fish; or lures such as diamond jigs or deep-running plugs. One of the best lures to use in this situation would be a bucktail jig, or one of those plastic-tail jigs, fished by retrieving it very slowly across the bottom. Do not be hesitant to combine bait with that jig either: a juicy seaworm or a strip of squid impaled on that jig hook can often turn the trick when all else fails. Retrieve that booby-trapped jig slowly across the bottom, or even bounce it back with short hops—both methods can be effective at times; or reel it slowly straight up as you impart a sweeping motion.

The bends of tidal rivers can cause currents to undercut their banks, creating overhanging cover that funnels food through the depths while providing protection for game fish. They lie in wait under the banks and wait for food to be carried to them by the current. You must fish from the opposite bank to obtain best results. Anchor or drift on the inside bend of the curve, and cast small swimming plugs to the opposite side, even going so far as to drag your lure from atop the opposite bank, to fall into the water naturally. If stalking on foot, tread lightly and use the expertise of freshwater trout men, taking care not to cause ground vibrations or throw a shadow that might spook nervous game fish.

The final non-visual spot to try for game fish is the entrance to bays or inlets. These are the openings that connect bays to the ocean, providing the access to game fish that enter and leave the shallow areas to feed. Here you can fish the outside of the entrance on outgoing tide, as game fish will usually be there, waiting to feed on bait swept out by the tide. By the same token, you should fish the inside of entrances on incoming tides, as then the game fish will be waiting there to ambush any bait coming in with the incoming tide. At any rate, inlets can be perfect places to intercept game fish; so fish there on any moving tide.

Our ideal situation would be when a visual sign appears in a known productive area, such as birds working an inlet. When it happens, get there fast and start fishing quickly—you have just located feeding inshore game fish!



The results of locating inshore gamefish could see you with a bent rod and a shrieking drag.

STATE CHANNEL FLUKE IN JUNE

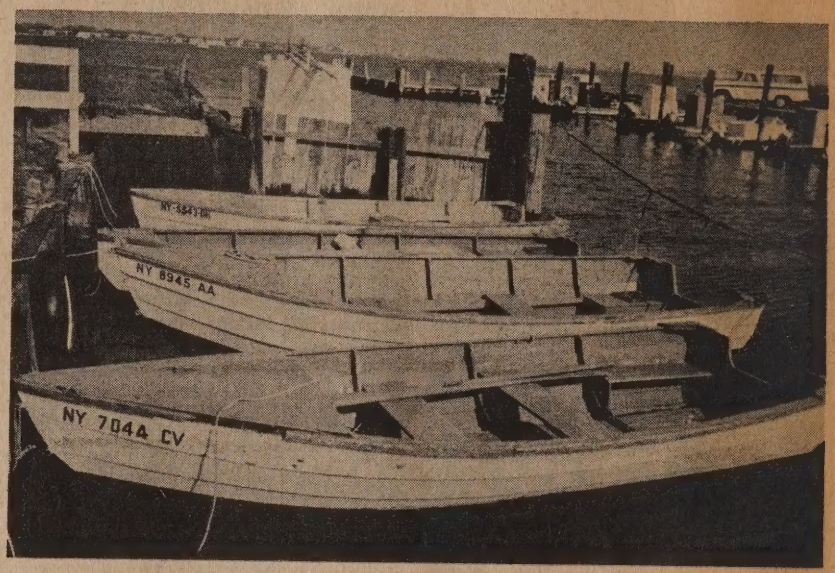
by Herb Buch

The habits of the fluke are known in a general way: they winter and spawn offshore on the Continental Shelf, then migrate inshore as the water warms. Local movements vary depending upon the number of fish present, and the concentrations of bait. At the present time, the stocks of this fish seem to be low in our area, and the outlook for next season is not good.

With such a forecast, it wouldn't hurt to examine the past season for hints as to where we might do some good. Fluke are a lot of fun to fish for because they require some skill and knowledge. They also furnish fillets that rival any on the table. Last season, to my knowledge, there were two periods when you had a better-than-average chance to catch a few fluke in the Great South Bay area: June in the State Channel; and late summer at the ocean end of the Fire Island Inlet. Private and party boats made the most of both sessions, but shore fishermen had a rough time.

May has been the beginning of the fluke season for several years now. It's not unusual for a flounder fisherman to pick up a stray fluke on worm or clam. These fish are usually shorts and do not necessarily portend a good early run. Nonetheless, this month will produce a few keepers for the man who works at it. The first real concentration, though, occurred in June; the State Channel, from Gilgo east, had a good population of fluke. This is the narrow channel right up against the barrier island and flanked on the north dy marsh islands or flats, with an occasional channel leading to shore line communities. The most favorable time seemed to be the end of the flood and the beginning of the ebb tides. As you know, the farther into the Bay you go, the later the tide will peak. That means you can fish the break of high water in one spot, and then catch the same tide farther into the Bay a little later. By planning your attack, you may be able to work the best tide in two or three spots.

Some tide tables will give you enough information to predict highs and lows at a particular spot. On-the-spot observation is the best way to get to know the territory. Always remember that the wind direction and strength will have an



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effect upon the time and height of the tides. A north wind tends to keep water out of the Bay, and the tide will ebb sooner than predicted. An onshore wind will make the high water not only higher, but later, and the ebb will be delayed. Winds also can interfere with the drift that you plan, muddy the water, or bring in weeds to make it unfishable. You must get out there and try the areas that are good and move around till you locate a spot that is fishable.

On one pleasant June day, my wife and I were planning on fishing Snake Hill Channel, which had been producing some fish. We had rented a skiff in Babylon and were heading across the Bay, when we realized that the wind had shifted to east and increased in strength. This would make drifting very difficult at our destination, as well as possibly concentrating weeds from all over Great South Bay. We changed direction and found relatively sheltered waters in the State Channel west of the Babylon cut.

Our outfits were light spinning tackle. The sinker was one ounce with a three-foot leader rigged for fluke just above the sinker. We also rigged a two-foot leader in hopes of picking up a weakfish. Live killies were used on the lower hooks. The trick here was to try to keep the boat drifting at the edge of the channel, and when we were able to do so, each drift produced at least one bite. The fluke were biting gently, and even with a drop-back, we often missed our fish. Occasionally after the drop back, if we felt the fish release the bait, we would release line again and sometimes the fluke would take on the second drop.

At first, we began to pick up shorts. When they are mouth-hooked, they are easy to unhook and release without hurting them. When a fish swallows the hook, we cut the leader near the fish's mouth and release the fish gently. If everyone would handle shorts with care, there would be more keepers to go around. After awhile, Jean's rod really began to bend. The fluke was a good three pounder, and when I tried to net him, he almost jumped out of the water in a wild bid for freedom. It was a good thing that Jean's drag was set to give line, otherwise he would have broken the eight pound test mono that we use. Jean was laughing at me as I hung over the side of the boat, manipulating the short-handled net we were using that day. She said later that she was sure that I was going to fall in as a result of my efforts to reach the fish.

Later that day, Jean's spinning reel began to scream as a fish ran off line. We figured right away that a weakfish had taken the bait, and she played the fish gently. The advantage of using light spinning tackle in the Bay is that you can use light line and small hooks, which seem to bring more bites. After several nice runs, she had the fish up near the boat and I had another chance to go through my acrobatic act with the short-handled net.

A high-low rig such as we used is a very good bet to take more than one variety of fish. You can use it from skiffs or small boats, but I would not advise it for party boats where constant tangles would result. Surprisingly, the weakfish took the killie on the bottom hook. Sand eels were the hot bait on many days last season. It was usually wise to take killies, sand eels and squid. The old combinations of squid and killie or squid and sand eel sometimes seemed to stir up the action. One experiment produced interesting results. Because tandem hook rigs are very often poor producers in the Bay, we tried using half of a sand eel on the small hooks. This worked very well on a few days and is worth trying when they keep stealing the full-length bait from a single hook.

On a party boat you will very often get twice as many bites by using small hooks on a light leader. We avoid the long-shanked models because a Sproat hook is much lighter and allows a killie to move more naturally in the water. A size #1 hook on a twenty pound test leader should be more than enough for any of our local fluke. The only dangerous time is when the fish is at the top of the water. At that point you must never lift his head out of water, because a fluke can exert tremendous leverage when the water does not cushion his violent gyrations. If you just leave him under the surface and let the drag protect your line until he can be netted, there is no fluke too large to land. There may be a few that you do not even get off the bottom, but we do not fish for records, and we are happy with the average run of fish.

If you use light tackle, you must constantly check the end of your line for wear and cut it back when necessary. Fluke have teeth which can abuse leaders, which makes it a good idea to often change hooks after you have a few bites. It is much less work to fish heavy tackle, but the man who works at fishing usually gets more fish. No one knows what this season will bring, but I intend to give the State Channel a good workout in June.

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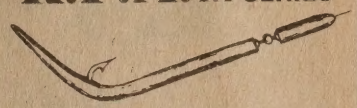

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The FISHERMAN INTERVIEW:

with Captain Ronnie Lepper

(Interviewed by staff member Stu Miller)

Q. What's hurting the area and the striper fishing, in your opinion?

A. A combination of a lot of things. Number one, it didn't just happen overnight—it's been happening over a long period of time. I made this same statement ten years ago to Al Reinfelder. I predicted what was going to happen and I was bombarded with calls from charter captains and so-called knowledgeable people who told me I was crazy and that things were as good as they ever were. It's a combination of overfishing—not only by commercial fishermen—but by the so-called sport fishermen and charterboats, such as myself—I'm just as guilty as anyone else. Pollution is doing a hell of a job on bass, especially in their spawnings areas of the Hudson and Chesapeake Bay. The pollution up there is tremendous. The Con Ed warm water kills on the fry in the Hudson are tremendous. The Chesapeake Bay slaughter over the years of tonging the fish and spearing them all winter long when they're dormant in the mud ... and the netting that goes on prior to the fish ever leaving the bay ... well, you put it all together. These are basically an inshore fish. They're not all over the world. If you put a gill net out from the end of Breezy Point jetty or Jones Inlet five miles straight out off the beach, you'd probably kill off 95% of the bass in one year. So, if you take an area where fish are so corralled and then bring in all this heavy artillery, you can't expect them to last forever. Live bait fishing is another factor which has been knocking the hell out of the breeding fish, because these bigger fish want and get the live bait you put out. Over the ten or so year period that live bunker fishing saw its heyday in the Sixties and early Seventies, all the fish caught were breeding fish. I've seen days at Sandy Hook, where as far as the eye could see, from the Hook on down to Monmouth Beach, there were 200 to 300 boats drifting and all these boats, seven days a week, were pulling seven to ten big fish per boat per day. Plus, the same guys were out at night, trolling plugs or using live bait doing the same thing, but now in the dark. *How long can the fish take that kind of beating?* Mix that in with the haul seiners at Montauk and constant pressure by the charter boats and your pseudo-sport fishermen with umbrella rigs and clam chum and everything else you want to throw in and you don't leave very much for tomorrow. Now that tomorrow is today.

Q. What do you see as the future of bass fishing for the industry, the public and for you in particular?

A. If things don't change, we'll run into an actual "no bass" period. We're heading in that direction, as pointed out by the decline of the past few years. I don't see any major changes in the conservation end of this. I don't see any daily bag limits. I don't see any stopping of dumping. I don't see any less pressure on these fish or any major difference in the Hudson or Chesapeake at this time. Unless we do get some strong measures to protect these fish, the only ones you'll see will be the ones in the aquarium. I don't see much future for striped bass fishing—not only in this area, but in any area.

Q. What about the stocked freshwater striped bass in the reservoirs down south?

A. These fish are stocked—hatchery raised. They've taken hold pretty good. But I'd get more satisfaction out of catching the real thing, the way you're supposed to catch them and in the right place: in the Atlantic Ocean.

Q. Are you going to be doing more fishing on other species besides bass, since that fishery seems to be dwindling?

A. Yes. Sharking, I have well under way, also tuna. I'll also run one day and also overnight trips to the Canyon for swordfish, marlin, yellowfin and dolphin. Plus all bottom fishing for anything that's available out of my inlet.

Q. Do you have a regular, steady mate?

A. I have three steady mates that alternate, all of whom have been with me for about fifteen years. Young guys can't take the grind. They work two to three days and they need two to three days rest.

Q. About how many trips do you sail a year?

A. I try to keep it to 100 trips, as I need time for other things, too. We usually run 90-110 trips a season.

Q. What do you like best about the charter business?

A. It's an interesting business. You never get bored with it. Everyday's different. The water is one of the few places left where you can do what you want, without asking someone. I like meeting new people and I get satisfaction out of catching fish for people who never caught before, kids and women. Just teaching people is interesting.

Q. What do you dislike most about the charter business?

A. The attitude of some people today. Years ago, people chartered a boat for pleasure, relaxation, friendship, camaraderie, etc. Today, you wouldn't believe the number of charters I get that call me and ask "what's your average poundage per trip", or "how many boxes can I expect to catch." The fellow who came out and fished for a trophy fish is few and far between today. Too many charters are interested in production-line fishing. This takes a little heart out of it. And you're only as good as yesterday. If you have a bad day, the people go with another boat next time. So you're under pressure to produce almost consistently—which is nearly impossible. It's getting to be a rat race. Even the charter boats are starting to cut each other's throats and that's something I don't like to see. Years ago, we worked together more. Today, everyone's trying to be a hero and make his own reputation. More working together usually means more fish and you have a better time.

Q. Did you ever consider the open (Party) boat business?

A. Yes, seven or eight years ago, but money was a problem. Myself and Al Coley of the Betty W were going to bring a 77' aluminum boat into the area, but we got bogged down in the finances. I regret that we

didn't push it. We'd have been one of the first 25 knot boats in this area.

Q. Do you plan to go open in the future?

A. It's too late. The reputations are made. Today, if you don't have a half million dollar boat, you're out of the picture as a new boat in the business.

Q. Is the Sheepshead Bay mosquito fleet of sharpshooters in their fast center console boats as good fishermen as they are reputed to be?

A. Let me put it this way. There are some real good guys and some really bad ones. The original guys who gained their reps are still around. But regrettably every boat that has an outboard, is open and the guy is wearing foul weather gear, is considered one of that fleet, which is unfair. Guys like Bob Sparta, Donny Ambrico, Bobby Mayer, Gary Goldberg, Al Tern—these guys are really super fishermen; they've produced tons and tons of fish out of those little boats every year. Regrettably, a lot of guys tried to ride on their coat-tails. There are eight to ten boats that produce a load of fish. These are knowledgeable guys—but that's it. You may see thirty, forty, or fifty little boats out there, but only that nucleus produces fish. They have speedy little boats, they have little wrecks, little pieces of bottom. They develop ways; they know each other's spots. A lot of these spots only hold ten to fifteen fish. They've got pieces all ranged up and find them without fancy electronics. A lot of open and charter boats look down on these guys as something of a lesser breed and some of these guys are really top fishermen—and they should be treated with respect.

Q. Do these eight to ten sharpies have any special weapons?

A. They are extremely diversified in their knowledge and are skilled in both the use of lures and live bait.

Q. Will Atlantic Beach continue to be your home port?

A. Yes. I live five minutes from my dock and also I'm centrally located so I can run east or west for any species and have decent fishing. I can run either way in the morning.

Q. What really bad things have happened on the boat?

A. I've been lucky. Never had any disaster on my boat. Many years ago, a thirty footer with a husband, wife and two kids exploded about a hundred yards away from me off Atlantic Beach. I was able to pick them all up and they all survived. I'm sure they'd have drowned otherwise, since no other boats were around and they had no life jackets on.

Q. Were you ever a commercial?

A. Sure. When I went from surf fishing to boat fishing. In those days, money came a lot harder than it does today ... the only way you could own a boat and fish at all was to sell your catch, and I consider ANYONE—and I repeat—ANYONE who sells their catch, a commercial fisherman and not a sport fisherman. "Sport fishermen" do not sell their fish for any excuse they might give. Anyone who consistently sells his fish should be tagged as a commercial fisherman. That's the way I look at it, whether it's agreeable to most people or not. I sold my catch to pay for my fuel and equipment and I considered myself a commercial.

Q. What has been your biggest thrill in fishing?

A. Catching my first fifty pounder (bass). It was on a surge tube off Atlantic Beach about twenty years ago, late October in the late afternoon; a fifty-two pounder and it was a long time coming. I caught literally hundreds of forty-nine and change fish, but that was the first fifty. There's been quite a few after that. Yes, that would have to qualify as one of the biggest thrills I've had in fishing.

Q. What one event was a turning point of particular significance for you?

A. Probably the first fish I caught on a live bunker. That was in the early Sixties.

Q. Why is that?

A. It changed the fishing tremendously. We went from

CAPTAIN RONNIE LEPPER

what we considered a good day's fishing, trolling up three to five bass, to catches measured in the tons. It was nothing to take 2,000 pounds of bass over thirty pounds each in one tide for two guys. I did it many a time. I must say it took a lot of the enjoyment out of fishing. It took away a lot of respect for the bass themselves and it took something away that cannot be replaced, and to my dying day I'll regret the first day that I dunked bunker. And I regret the first day anyone else ever did it, because that was the turning point not just for me, but for bass fishing per se. It made a lot of people fishermen who WERE never and WILL never be, in my estimation, good fishermen. It made heroes out of them. It just took a tremendous toll on the breeding fish and ridiculous as it may sound to some people, it's one of the most important reasons we don't have any big bass around today.

Q. This is live bait fishing with bunker? Bunker dunking?

A. Yes. I remember one day a fellow by the name of Bill Bratton and myself, in a solid fog where you had to come almost up on top of the beach before you could see it—we took thirty-five or forty bass over thirty pounds before we ran out of bait. We took bunkers right out of the fish's stomach and dropped them right back in the water again. As quickly as you got back in the water you got another fish on. That's how many bass there were. Compared to today, it's disheartening to think of the damage that myself and many other people have done, by doing that type of fishing. I've learned. Many years ago, I stopped that production line fishing and I won't even do it now with a charter. I try to get a fair catch for my people: a sufficient catch and go home. But regrettably, you still have the guy out there today who will take everything he can, as much as he can jam into his boat or his fish box. As long as we have that kind of fishing, everything is going to go downhill.

Q. What other interests do you have besides fishing?

A. I do a lot of skiing. I get a tremendous amount of enjoyment out of it. I used to be an avid hunter. I've hunted probably as long as I've been fishing. I've done a tremendous amount of duck shooting as a shooter and also as guide. Five years ago I gave up hunting and have sold most of my guns. I just don't enjoy it anymore. I still make my annual deer hunting trip more out of tradition than anything else. I enjoy the woods and do a lot of hiking. But skiing is my main interest outside of fishing.

Q. Is there a lot of competition on the water for striped bass?

A. It's unbelievable! It used to be that during the height of the season—spring or fall—during the week you'd find five to ten boats out on the water here (Atlantic and Long beaches) or over in Jersey. Today, on any

(Continued on next page.)

given weekday, if there is any *slight hint* that there's any fish around, you'll find hundreds of boats spread out anywhere from Long Branch to Fire Island. If the word is out that a few fish were caught at Breezy Point Jetty or Long Beach or Rockaway, the very next day it's almost impossible to fish that particular area. It seems that today people have so much leisure time that there just aren't any uncrowded days anymore; it used to be like that on just weekends. Weekends are just impossible to fish today, utterly impossible. I'm talking about inshore bass or bluefishing. There are so many boats that there are times that I just have to stop the boat and reel in the lures because I can't go in any direction. And a lot of bad manners and greediness are shown that you never used to see. Cutting off of boats, cutting of lines and it's all unnecessary ... everybody is just trying to catch more than the next guy. It's a crime; it's something to see.

Q. Does the competition ever get to the point of violence?

A. Positively! I've seen fist fights, boats ram one another—and we're talking about a FISH. We're not talking about gold or silver shipments, or family disputes—we're talking about catching a FISH. I've seen guys actually *ram* other boats, intentionally run their boats over four or five wire lines, even at the risk of ruining their own boat by wrapping up 400-500 feet of wire in their propellers, all because someone "cut them off" or "didn't make the right turn." And *cursing*—forget about it. I had a gillnetter this year—I was trolling along the beach down around the Monmouth Beach rocks and I caught my spoons in his underwater gill net—no markers on it; illegal, of course. I picked the net up and I had four spoons caught in it. I lost two and I was able to cut two spoons out of the net. To get the spoons out I had to cut a small portion of the net. I thought I was being a nice guy by not cutting the net in half. Maybe twenty minutes later, my mate yells ... and I turn around and here comes this thirty to forty foot gillnetting boat bearing down on me, appearing to want to ram me broadside. At the last minute, he cuts across my sterns, takes all four of my spoons. He was dragging an anchor behind his boat. He stripped four wire lines, broke a rod, took all my lures and proceeded to stay alongside me the next two hours, threatening to shoot me, kill me, sink my boat, ruin my fishing for life—you name it, all because I cut two spoons out of an illegal net, without complaining, calling the Coast Guard or just cutting the net in half. He harassed me to the point where I put a shotgun on the Kim the following day. We had a sort of confrontation everyday over the radio. He wouldn't let me fish and I wouldn't let him fish. It became ridiculous. I couldn't put a line in the water and, in turn, I wouldn't let him put his net in the water. These are things that go on everyday. Now you have the problem of not only sport fishermen and the charter boats, but you also have the problem of gillnetters on the bass. They put so many gillnets out along the beach and most of them are illegal by the way, that it's almost impossible to troll—you're trolling through a crossword puzzle. Years ago, guys put markers on them, red flags—now these guys drop two or three 500-1,000-foot gillnets under the water ... they don't even mark them anymore. And they'll sit by, while a charter or private boat will run right over those nets, and laugh when all the lines are lost into it. It's just unbelievable. This is what the general fishing has deteriorated to.

Q. Has the 200-Mile limit produced any results as far as you can see?

A. I see absolutely no difference in any of the fishing at all. The mackerel this year (1978) were at their worst. We had no herring run. There were very few bunker. The bass fishing was awful; the cod on hook and line was almost nil. The whiting and ling was at, or little below average. I see no difference in the fishing at all. But time will tell; you can't draw a conclusion on one or two years' perspective. A lot of the damage has been DONE. And how do you build something back up when you're issuing permits to fish within the 200-Mile Limit before the law was even in effect? I assumed the 200-Mile Limit was to allow just American boats to fish within that limit. However, we still have a tremendous number of foreign vessels fishing within this new territorial limit and there's not enough Coast Guard or police action to police these boats. There are constant illegal acts being committed everyday out there, but we don't have the money or the manpower to stop it. And permits are STILL being issued to foreign vessels to come in and fish without our glorious 200-Mile territorial limit.

Q. What's your own personal favorite fish on the rod?

A. I don't think there is any fish that swims that can match the speed or power or a tuna. That's my favorite fish to catch—whether school or giant tuna ... I've caught enough of both of them. Fishing each with the proper tackle, it's a thrilling event. I can only compare giant tuna with being tied to the back of a runaway car. The 15-20 lb. tuna on 20-30 lb. tackle is equally exhilarating. It's a tremendous, fast, powerful fish that just doesn't know when to give up. They're not easy to catch, so you do need a certain amount of experience to do the job. It's just a tremendous enjoyment to catch them.

Q. Do you find that the water in the area you fish is cleaning up?

A. No, not really. I still see them dumping everyday I come in from offshore from shark fishing all summer long. I still see the acid barges dumping acid and the honey boats leaving Debs Inlet coming back within 15 or 20 minutes, having supposedly run ten miles offshore. The only problem is that these are ten knot boats and they're back in 15 minutes. They're dumping the human wastes of Nassau County just off the beaches. I've run across areas of acid or chemical stain that stretch for miles as far as the eye could see. I've had it stain my boat so badly that I had to sand it off—I couldn't clean it off any other way. I've had some sort of stain hit my glass windshield and actually eat through the glass. That was still on the boat when I sold it. I see oil spills running for miles and miles. I see all this because I run everyday during the summer. I see tankers pumping their bilges with five miles of oil slick behind them. You report this to the proper people and yet nothing happens. It just continues. I don't see any slow-down in the dumping of chemicals or sludge in the general area of Atlantic and Long Beaches within three miles offshore—so how could the water be any cleaner? I see a lot less fish in that particular area, especially in the area of these acid stains. The acid stain off New Jersey is ten to fifteen miles across in any direction and it's just dead water; there's nothing on the bottom and nothing in it. The dumping hasn't stopped, so the water quality has to be worse.

Q. Have you been reporting this short dumping by the sludge barges?

A. Of course. You talk to the Coast Guard, to the police. They know the problem exists. I assume it's a matter of dollars and cents and politics. The enforcement end is NIL. They're actually given the O.K. to dump. I have friends who used their boats for experimental probing for sludge in these areas and have taken experienced crews of scientists out there and definitely, without a doubt they will tell you that the bottom is loaded with sludge—and not too far off the beach. So-called politicians scream that this is a lie; but I'M talking to the people that are RIGHT DOWN THERE ON THE BOTTOM in wet suits, looking right at it and bringing it up in vials and into their laboratories. But nobody seems to want to do anything about it. They talk about dates of 1981, 1987, 1989 ... I've heard dates for years, but I still see the sludge and they're still dumping; always seem to get some kind of "extension" on their dumping. So, I guess it's that money and politics carry the clout. You can't buck big business and they have to dump some place. It's cheaper to dump in the ocean and as long as it's cheaper and legal, they're going to dump there.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

MONTAUK
★ BEST BET ★
POLLACK

A huge school of giant pollack that was more than four miles in diameter showed up south of Block Island during the week and provided some real blitz fishing on Wednesday and Thursday. Unfortunately, the thick fog, wind and rain during the weekend put a damper on the catches although the fish are still around. Some great catches of large flounder and snowshoes being taken both locally and at Gardiner's Island. Henry Colombi's prediction of the first bass being taken on Saturday was less than twenty-five hours off the mark. Sea bass, blackfish and even bluefish showing up in the catches, while cod are scarce—a sure sign that the water is warming up.

Captain Warren Hader of the charter boat **Devilfish** reported making a good score with the pollack south of Block Island on Sunday. Using Ava diamond jigs and tubes, the party took 21 pollack almost all over 25 lbs. They also bagged a half dozen cod of 9 and 10 lbs. and a 10 lb. bluefish. Warren said that due to a late cancellation, he is open for booking this holiday weekend and is guaranteeing his customers gas for their return trip home.

Captain Buddy Dorman of the **Viking Skipper II** said that without a miss, they've been back at the dock early everyday loaded with monster pollack, some cod, mackerel and bluefish, all on Ava diamond jigs. John Stonitsch of East Northport single-handed in two days stripped

Giant Pollack in the 25 to 35-lb. class "hang" from the rail of the *Marlin V on Sunday.*

John Stonitsch of East Northport shows off part of his catch of 28 pollack totaling over 500-lbs., all on Ava diamond jigs. John came back the next day to hoist another 21 pollack that weighed 400-lbs., and he stripped his reel.

his reel landing 49 pollack with the combined weight of over 900 lbs. The Captain said the fishing couldn't be better.

Captain Richard Rade of the **Marlin IV and V** reported that he has been taking 70 to 80 pollack a trip and they're real bruisers in the 20-30 lb. class. Both boats are now sailing for cod and pollack weekdays 6:30 a.m. and on the weekends at 5:30 a.m.

Captain Paul Forsberg of the **Viking Fishing Fleet** reported fantastic blitz fishing on Wednesday and Thursday, but the poor weather and numerous boats on the weekend made for some tough fishing. Almost all the big fish being taken now are pollack, with a few cod mixed in. Paul said that the half-day boat will be starting this weekend, sailing at 8AM and 1PM daily for fluke and flounder.

Captain Fritz Hubner of the charter boat **Mistress Too** takes the honors this year for the first Montauk bass, even though he sheepishly admitted that it was purely accidental. He put out some wire line Sunday to nail a pollack when a 15 lb. striper jumped on the hook instead. In addition to this fish, the charter took 20 pollack on diamond jigs that ranged from 22 to 28 lbs. No cod. Fritz said they stopped at Gin Beach on the way back and took a dozen flounder in the 2 lb. range. Fritz noted that with the rapidly warming water temperature, we may see the start of the spring Montauk bass run this weekend. Fortunately, he has Sunday and Monday open for those who want to give it a try.

Captain John DeMaio of the charter boat **Vivienne** said that due to the thick fog and sloppy seas on the weekend, he fished flounder close to home. On both Saturday and Sunday, the charters aboard bagged 60 flounder up to 2½ lbs. fishing at Shagwong and Rocky Point. (Ed's. Note: Sunday's excellent catch was made despite the presence of Crazy Joe Koestner.) John said that he also had some sea bass and blackfish mixed in with the flounder.

Henry Colombi of the **Star Island Yacht Club** reported that Lou Rosado on the "Eva-Lou II" fished Gardiner's Island on Sunday and bagged 83 snowshoe flounder that yielded 126 lbs. of fillets. Good catches are also being made at Rocky Point, Shagwong and Gin Beach.

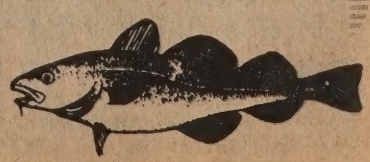
Captain Mike Albronda of the charter boat **Montauk** called to say that they really knocked the socks off of the pollack on Thursday south of Block Island. A party headed by Bob Ingenito of Yonkers took 38 pollack from 20-36 lbs. on diamond jigs. Vinnie Formisano used light tackle and took a 24 lb. 6 oz. pollack on 12 lb. test. The Captain said now is the time and he has a few open dates available. The boat specializes in diamond jigging for bass, bluefish and giant pollack, so give them a call.

Charter boat **Adios** called to say Sunday's party for Jack Slekes of New Hyde Park had 26 pollack in the 20-35 lb. class. Captain Phil then took them trolling south of Block Island. Saturday's party ended up flounder fishing due to the extremely bad weather conditions.

Cove Marina reports Frank Son and friends caught 35 flounder Sunday up to 32 lbs. at Gardiner's (Easter Plains) . Tony Kani and son fished the same area and had 30 flounder up to 3 lbs. Washington Shoals produced flounder and blackfish up to 5 lbs. on clams and mussel.Cod and pollack catches were also strong there. Some weaks showing up, up to 7 lbs. Lou Carillo had 54 flounder fishing Promised Land, fishing by the nets. Fish were 1½ to 3 lbs. Joe Onofrio of Plainview had a 3½ lb. flounder fishing at Cherry Cove on board the Dottie III on the ebb using mussels.

Captain Pete Van Alst of the **Modar II** dropped us a note asking us to tell you that the boat is now back from the Keys where he had a great season and brought back a freezer full of mako favorites such as yellowtail snapper, blue runner, mullet and red snapper. His first shark trip will be June 1. Pete still has four weekends open and quite a few weekdays. He spotted a porbeagle while passing Shinnecock Inlet. So, shark are in the area.

Charter boat **King Wayne** called to tell us he had fished south of Block Is. this past week and his charter did well on pollack, boating fish from 20-30 lbs. on jigs and tubes over the weekend. A few cod were taken as well on jigs.



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SOUTH FORK

★ BEST BET ★

FLUKE

EAST HAMPTON

Three Mile Harbor Fishing Station reports no boats went out this past weekend due to the terrible weather, but they expect action and customers to be very active again as soon as the weather settles down.

HAMPTON BAYS

Ronnie at **Tony's Fishing Station** reports good flounder catches at buoy 22 on worms and clam. Blacks being taken at the bridge, these are 2-3 lb. fish. Fourteen fluke were taken in East Channel on killies and sand eels on Sunday.

MORICHES BAY

Mark at **Island Fishing Station** says things were pretty bad over the weekend due to terrible weather conditions, but that in spite of it all, Bill Carlson and Mom Kate bagged 103 tommy cod and 28 flounder up to 1 lb. 7 oz., fishing blood and sand worms with mussel chum off Great Gun Beach.

East Moriches Bait and Tackle tells us fluke starting to move in as evidenced by a catch of 17 keepers taken on incoming tide on sand eels and squid by Al Pappadia and Bob Ruth at East Cut. Blues were taken on the weekend at the Inlet and at Smith Point Bridge. One customer had 25, which he caught from the beach on squid strips. These were 4-5 lbrs. Flounder remain steady at buoys 36 and 42 on worms and clam chum. Blacks are being caught at the rocks in the inlet. An 11 lb. 8 oz. black was weighed in at Hi-Way Fishing Station.

Pictured are George Schorski, Peter Grimaldi and Richard Mancuso with 47 flounder caught on worms and mussel chum between buoys 43 and 44.

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GREAT SOUTH BAY
★ BEST BET ★
FLUKE

MASTIC BEACH

Gary at **Stiriz' Fishing Station** reports this has been a fabulous fishing week, excluding the very windy and stormy days. Frank Campbell had 25 bay blues at buoy 17 on a Captain Bill rig. Weakfish up to 9 lbs. were taken during the week at buoy 12 on all tides on jelly worms and Salty Dogs. Bay blues invaded the buoy 12 area, hitting Capt. Bill rigs which are similar to mackerel trees and are trolled. Call Gary for details if interested. Blowfish were caught in the buoy 13 area to the tune of 30-40 per boat. Not huge, but they are blowfish in the 6-8" range. Lots of mid-size blue claw crabs around. Fluke from buoys 24-26 up to 4½ lbs. on Salty Dogs tipped with squid. Live killies, sand eels and spearing also being used. Some flounder being picked at buoy s 17 and 19.

SAYVILLE

VINNIE AT **Young's Fishing Station** tells us he was blown out for the weekend, but on Thursday and Friday there were a lot of weaks around at buoys 28, 29 and 30 and also at the Cove. Blues moved in at Ocean Beach Thursday through Sunday, fish 1½-2½ lbs. on weakfish offerings of Salty Dogs and jelly worms. Some weaks just east of Browns River, 600' offshore. Davis Park on Sunday afternoon and also Greens Point produced. A few blackfish at Barrett Beach on clam and fiddler crabs. A few blowfish around which is a good sign.

WEST SAYVILLE

Mike at **South Bay Fishing Station** also tells us he was wiped out for the weekend. On Sunday, 2-3 lb. blues were taken on the Heckscher Flats, buoys 4 and 5 on plastic worms and shrimp meant for weakfish. Sand porgies were taken on squid strips in this same area. The area also produced some fluke on plastic shrimp tipped with squid strip. Weakfish, of course, were at buoys 4 and 5 at Heckscher and were taken during the week on Salty Dogs and jelly worms.

EAST ISLIP

Wally at **Buoy II Sport Shop** weighed in a near record 13 lb. 7 oz. weakfish for Carol Nugent of Islip last week. Carol's fish was 1 oz. shy of the current women's 12 lb. class record. Carol took her fish on a grape flavored jelly worm at Ocean

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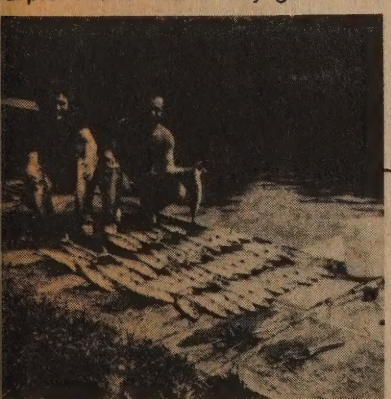
AVA

each.
Henry and Larry Schultz stopped
with 6 weakfish to 10 lbs. and Ed
ientz and Joe Panteleo had 6 weaks
nd 5 fluke over the weekend. All
ese fish were taken at West
annel and Ocean Beach. Catches
er the weekend were down due to
rong east winds. Despite the
ustery winds on Saturday, Ron
ossi had an 8 lb. weak and 12
uefish fishing behind West Island.

BAY SHORE

The open boat **Casey Lee** reports
at they are now on the fluke run
very day. the weather hurt the
shing the latter part of last week
ut by Sunday fishing was greatly
nproved. The fluke are all good
ze fish with 95% of them keepers.
est fishing has been found in the
let area as well as Snakehill and
Vest Channels. The Captain asked
s to let our readers know that they
re know sponsoring a contest for
ne largest fluke taken aboard the
oat during the season. The winner
ill receive one free trip per week
or the rest of his or her life! The
resent leader is Sean Hennesy with
3 lb. 6 oz. summer flatfish. The
fternoon weakfish trips were good
ntil mid-week when fishing became
oor due to "lousy weather and poor
ide conditions". Fifty fish were
aken on Wednesday at West Chan-
el and Ocean Beach but since then,
ne fish have been off the feed.
lenty of fish are around but a few
ays of mild weather are needed for
he good fishing to resume.

Karl at **Smokey's Bait and Tackle**
eports that flounder are still avail-
ble at the Oak Beach Cove on
orms and clam. Weaks were a
ood number until Saturday when
ney retreated before the weather.
Karl weighed in a 14 lb. weak for
Bob Anthony of Bay Shore who had
other weakfish besides, all on Rich
Ferri's Rum and Coke. This was
Wednesday and they fell on double
look jelly worms, strawberry and
urple. Fluke was a very good item



Joe Fucci and John Milachouski with a load of mackerel taken south of F.I. Inlet. Photo courtesy of Bait & Tackle Unlimited.

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vest of the bridge on sand eels and squid at the Robert Moses bridge. Sunday 2-3 lb. blues appeared around the bay bridge. Weakfishing should go on the upturn again once the weather calms down. Winner of the South Shore Marlin and Tuna Club weakfish contest was Frank Barrera of Bay Shore with a 12 lb. 5 oz. tiderunner taken at buoy 12. Smokey's has sand worms by the flat for the weakfishermen.

OAK BEACH

The Store reports some weakfish have been taken under the drawbridge but the casters far outnumber the weakies. Fluke have been taken under the Moses bridge on sand eels and squid. Weakfishing has slowed due to east winds on the weekend. Blackfish were steady at the Sore Thumb and off the jetties on worm and clam. No bass reports, not too many casters trying due to the weather. Netters are reporting loads of 6-8" bass and loads of 3-4" squid in Fire Island Inlet. Good fluking on the Captree boats. Plenty of fish—just need the weather.

CAPTREE

Captain Gordon Roman of the **Captree Queen II** reports fluking has been good all week, except for Friday and Saturday, when the winds and rain came. Catches average 4-12 keeper fluke per man, fish running 1½ to 2½ lbs. on sand eels and fluke belly. The boat fished around the bridge and from buoys 20-16 and further down the inlet also all tides. Afternoon weakfish trips at mid-week produced nicely to the tune of 20-40 big weakfish per trip. Friday and Saturday afternoons were slow due to the weather. Sunday afternoon picked up with 15 weakfish boated. The weaks are from West Island to Ocean Beach and are running 5-10 lbs, being taken primarily on jelly worms and also jelly/sand combos.

Charter boat **Captain Eddy B II** called to tell of good fluking Saturday with 5-12 fluke per man despite bad weather conditions. Sand eels were on the hook from State Channel to F.I. Inlet. On Sunday, John Draygen lifted a 5 lb. fluke under the Robt. Moses bridge. The fish hit a sand eel at the bottom of the ebb. A last minute cancellation on a Saturday, May 26 charter now makes that date open for anyone out there interested.

Captree Bait Station reports good flounder and fluke catches at Overlook and Fire Island Piers on Sunday. Flounder were a good number at the Jones Beach Piers on bloodworms. Fluke on the sand bar at the Robt. Moses bridge, with cars parked at the Overlook. From the bank under the drawbridge, some weaks were taken on rubber worms and some small blues on tin.

Capt. Neil Delanoy of the charter

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This 13 lb. 12 oz. tiderunner fell to Peter Mabanta of Levittown. The huge weak took a strawberry jelly worm fished from the shore at the Captree drawbridge. Photo courtesy "The Store."

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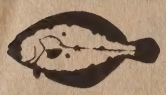

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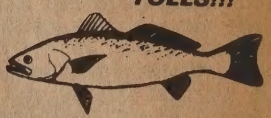

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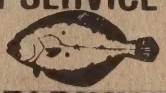

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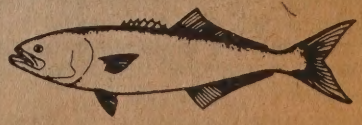

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boat **Lady Ann** reports fluking in general has been very good with the exception of Friday and Saturday when gale winds seriously curtailed the action. On Sunday the fishing was again gaining momentum as 82 keeper fluke came aboard. Fishing was done at the bridge, the Inlet, Sexton Island, and Snakehill Channel.

Capt. Charlie Kennedy of the **Joseph Fleet** told of a fair pick of fluke on Saturday when 40 fares decked 175 of the newly arrived flatfish. They are running 1½ to 3 lbs. and are being taken on sandeels and strips of fluke belly. Best fishing has been from the bridge to the mouth of the Inlet on the last of the ebb and the first of the flood. Ninety percent of the fish are keepers. Afternoon weakfish trips have been slow in recent days but some fish are being caught. These are all big 7 to 12 lb. tiderunners. Jelly worms and taking most of the fish and best action has been in West Channel.

Capt. Richie Westerlind of the **Captain Richie** told us that fluke fishing has gotten off to a good start with almost all of the fish keepers. Richie has found good action from the Lighthouse to the Inlet on

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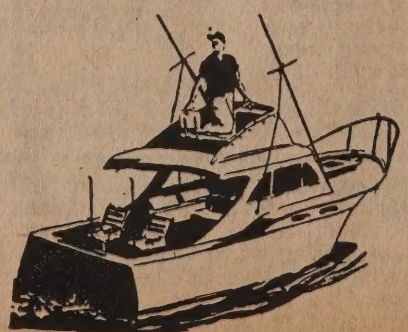


sandeels and fluke belly.

The Captain Ben Litwin reported good fluke action on the incoming tide near the bridge. Average catch per man is 4 to 5 fish most of which are being taken on spearing or sandeels. Killies are taking some fish.

Capt. Speedy Hubert of the **Speedy VI** filed a dismal weakfish report. As of mid-week the fishing collapsed due to strong, east winds and a severe drop in water temperature. Plenty of fish are in the bay and all that is needed is for the weather to cooperate and the fast action of last week should resume. Fish were again being picked Sunday P.M. so maybe the fishing will breakopen again soon.

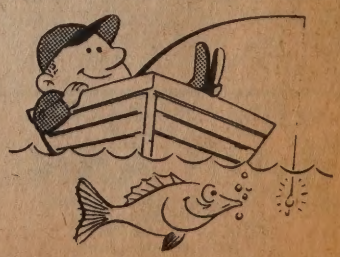
The **Speedy VI** reported fair fluking with most of the fish taken over the 14" minimum size. Best action has been in the Inlet area on sandeels, spearing, and killies. The **Speedy VII** is now on the fluke run fulltime.

Bob Luthmann called to report that he and Roy Kern fished aboard the charterboat **Blue Albatross** last Thursday. The pair were among a group of hospital executives and their families. Members of the party averaged 12 flounder apiece fishing inside the Sore Thumb. Pool fish was a 4 lb. porgie.

BABYLON

Babylon Fishing Station reports he was blown out Saturday, but Sunday was an improvement. Skiffs brought back fluke, best catches at the intersection of the Babylon cut and state channel. Several 3½ lbrs. were weighed in. Weaks were taken through Friday at the intersection of Dickson's and west channel to the tune of 5-6 weaks per man, fish in the 7-8 lb. range. Best was the last 2 hrs. of the ebb in the evenings, prior to Saturday. Fluke are hitting sand eels and killies. A few weaks have also been taken in the state channel on artificials and on sand worms. Flounder will still eat your worms if you work the deeper holes.

Augie's Bait and Tackle tells us of the weakfish contest held on the weekend. High hook boat was 4 fish . The contest winner was Ron Shimborski with a 10 lb. 13 oz. tiderunner. Lots of small blues from 2-6 lbs "acres and acres" at the long Captree bridge, reports Al Lorenzetti who picked up 18 of them. Good fluking in front of the CG station on sand eels and squid.



SOUTH SHORE BAYS

★ BEST BET ★

FLUKE

COPIAGUE

Bait and Tackle Unlimited reports fluke in the inlet and state channel on squid, spearing and sand eels. Weaks at Ocean Beach on jelly worms and Salty Dogs. Larry weiged in 12 big weaks over 9 lbs. this past week. Flounder in state channel on sand worms and red dyed clam. Blacks at the artificial reef on fiddlers. Lots of small blueclaw crabs all over.

SEAFORD

Ted at **Uncle Hermie's Fishing Station** tells us that customers are splitting their days between fluke and flounder. Flounder fishermen are getting 20-40 per boat. One angler kept 20 fluke which ran up to 3½ lbs. Best action has been west of the Wantagh bridge, killies on the hook.

Pop's Fishing Station says the weekend was a disaster, but that during the week fair flounder fishing to the tune of 30-40 per skiff was enjoyed at 2nd and 3rd bridges, Squaw Island and at the drain. Eels, blowfish and blackfish were also picked up around the bridges. Mr. Dugan of Brooklyn had a good catch of blacks at the pilings of the 3rd Wantagh.

Wanser's Bait and Tackle also tells of good floundering still to be had at the 3rd Wantagh and the Four Corners on worms and clams. Fluke are throughout the bay, sloop channel best. Weaks at the 3rd Wantagh, state channel, the measured mile and Unqua Pt. on sand and jelly worms. Lon weighed in on Friday for Charlie Welch and Bill Disolo of Baldwin 8 weaks to 9 lbs. plus one keeper fluke, all taken at Ocean Beach on grape jelly worms.

MERRICK

Nick's Fishing Station reports flounder still holding up in Neds Creek and at the entrance of Short Beach at the Coast Guard Station. Fluke have been falling to sand eels in Swift Creek, Rowboat Alley and at Merrick Hole. During the week, one boat had 12 keeper fluke and another had 13. One customer on Wednesday, bagged 40 keeper fluke on sand eels in Swift Creek. The weekend bombed out due to weather. Dr. Manfrini had 22 weaks at Ocean Beach up to 9 lbs. on sand worms. An 11 lb. 8 oz. weak was caught aboard the boat Rolling Stones.

Merrick Marine Tackle Center has had customers stopping in reporting fluke action picking up in Jones Inlet on squid and sand eels. Weakfish in the state channel from Zachs Bay east on sands and jellies, though no leap job. Scott and Roy will, by mid-August, be moving to larger quarters several blocks to the east on Merrick Road. Watch for the grand opening.

BALDWIN

Arthur Street Fishing Station reports some fluke Sunday to 3½ lbs. from Jones Inlet and Reynold Channel. Flounder still being taken at Short Beach. Some blues at the second buoy outside J.I. on small umbrellas. Dr. Stu Bernstein had a 10 lb. 8 oz. weak taken at Ocean Beach on sand worms.

WEST END SOUTH SHORE

★ BEST BET ★

U-PICK-IT

FREEPORT

captain Richie Kessinger on the **StarStream II** reports Sunday's action was mostly ling and a few sea bass. Some customers had upwards of two dozen fish. The boat returned early Saturday due to the Frankenstein weather and sea conditions. Once the bottom settles down, more sea bass can be expected to be caught along with the ling.

Fair catches of sea bass, reports the **Captain Al**, with some fares knocking down 30 fish. There is also a good mixed catch of ling and blackfish thrown in. Some double-header sea bass have also been pulled up. Once the weather settles down, more sea bass can be expected.

Charter boat **Blue Fin** called to tell us Saturday, Capt. Karlin had excellent flounder catches in local creeks, using worm, clam and a lot of chum for the group from Manufacturers Hanover Bank. The pool fish ran 1 lb. 8 oz. Many double

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headers came up. Scattered fluke were also taken on flounder rigs on the weekend.

Anthony's Fishing Station tells of a few good fluke catches this past week, from the Meadowbrook bridge through Swift Creek on sand eels and squid. Reynolds channel east of the bridge was another good spot on all tides, fish 2½ to 3 lbs. There is still good flounder fishing in Haunts Creek. Two men in one rental skiff had over 150 keeper flounder on Tuesday. Everything fell apart on Saturday.

Capt. Lou III called to tell us his fluking remains very productive and on Sunday, he had passengers with catches of 10, 12, 14 fluke. High hook was in the mid-teens. Fish are being taken up to 4 lbs. on sand eels. Twenty keepers a drift was what was going on for awhile on Sunday, working the bar across from the Coast Guard Station. Mike says the fishing was a lot tougher on Saturday due to horrible conditions. But his fares picked away.

Captain Hall says Tuesday was the best fluke day of the week, though it was good all week, fishing Reynolds channel, short beach, Coast Guard and Swift Creek and at the bridge. Very few throwbacks. Pools usually ran 4-5 lbs. and fish averaged 2 lbs. on sand eel and squid or mackerel.

Charter boat **Jack Pot** called to report he's splashing in this weekend and has July 7 open for the Charvin Open Shark Tournament.

Hook, Line and Sinker Bait and Tackle tells of fluke in the inlet and has heard of a 7½ lb. fluke caught there on a Salty Dog. Some blows at the inlet and Reynolds Channel on flounder rigs.

Freeport Boatmen's Association reports that on Saturday the **Acme II** picked away at flounder. Jerry Lenahan of Telephone Pioneers of America took the pool with a 3 lb. flattie taken at the Swift Creek Bridge. **Nite Owl II** on Sunday enjoyed good flounder catches at the bar between Short Beach and the bridge. The boat will be running a tilefish reservation trip Sunday June 17, sailing 12:01 a.m. Call for details. Fluke were taken on the **North Star** in Reynolds Channel fishing both sides of the bridge, fish 2-4 lbs. On Saturday, the **Capt. Joe** fished flounder in Reynolds Channel

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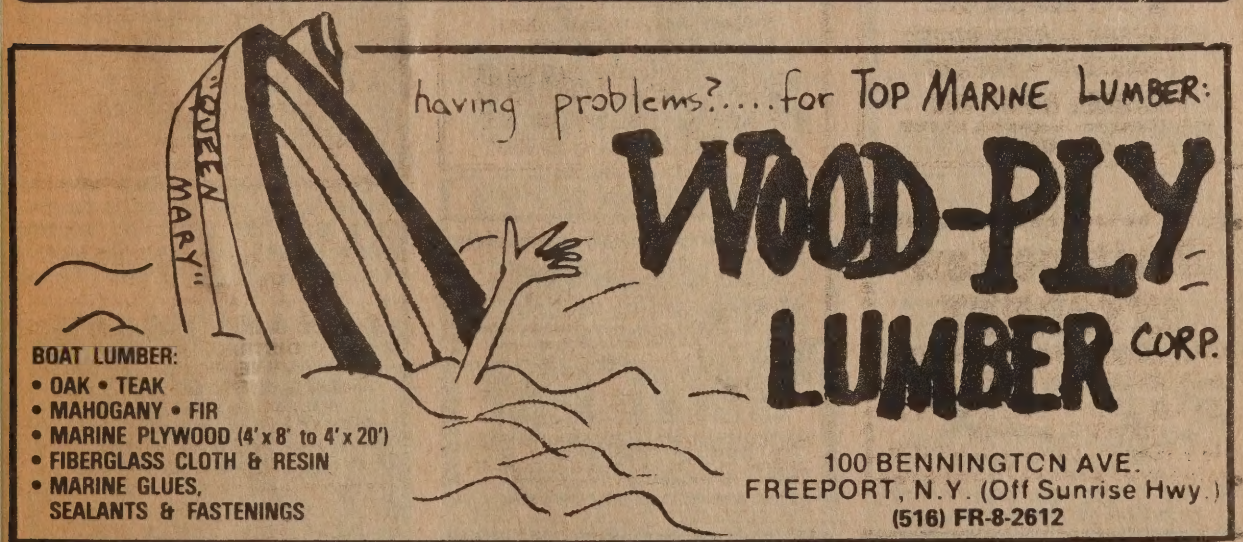

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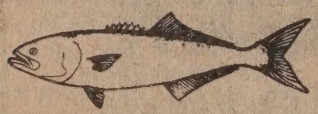

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and fluke in the inlet to split up the day.

Charter boat **The Rogue** called and tells us he's fishing nights at the Meadowbrook bridge and while catching no weaks, has had some bass runoffs. On the bottom, he has picked fluke, a 3 lb. black, sea bass and some ling.

LONG BEACH

Captain Bruce on the **Nyar I** called to say that he is now fluking in the inlets, fish up to 4 lbs. with an average of 6 per man. Whiting and ling just outside Debs continues to be strong. Dr. Franzese and group fished the inlet and caught 200 ling.

Tom at the **Long Beach Sports Marina** told us that Bernie Haag and Bob King had 24 fluke up to 3 lbs. on Saturday using sandeel bait. The pair fished the north side of the Atlantic Beach Bridge and used their engine to slow their drift. Tom also told us of Joe Greco who took a 13 lb. bluefish at the Meadowbrook Bridge on Saturday. He had no further details about this catch.

ATLANTIC BEACH

Sy Rubin of **Hennings Fishing Station** reports some flounders still around and good blackfishing going on at all the local bridges. Blackfish are running 3 to 4 lbs. and being taken on fiddler crabs. Fluke are now in solid and are being taken on squid, spearing, sandeels, and killies. These fish are 95% keepers with the average being 2 to 4 lbs. Ling and whiting are plentiful at the 56th Street Hole but on the small side.

Mike at **Seaman's Bait** tells of flounder in the ¾ lb. range behind May's and TSS which is actually Mott's Creek, at the head of Jamaica Bay. Blacks at the Marine

Some of the 38 fluke landed by Paul Panasuk, Don Langdon and Dave Langdon at the Cedarhurst Yacht Club. The early season catch was made with sand eels and squid. Photo courtesy Skippy's Bait & Tackle.

Parkway and north and south channel bridges on fiddlers and green crabs, fish up to 4 lbs. A few fluke on sand eels from the beach at Beach 9th St., Far Rockaway.

Mark's Bait & Tackle called to tell us that Frank Reisen caught an 8 lb. black on green crab and Jane Gurnasi took a 6 lb. black on green crab. Both catches were at the Second Loop Bridge. 12 other blacks were caught in the same area averaging 2 to 4 lbs. Both tides. Fluke fishing is good in Reynolds Channel to the Inlet. 2 to 4 lb. blues have been caught in the Inlet and a few in Reynolds Channel on fluke rigs.

POINT LOOKOUT

Ed's Fishing Station told us that fluke fishing has been good in Reynolds Channel from the Loop Bridge to the Inlet. Fish are averaging 2 lbs. with very few throwbacks. Rental boats managed anywhere from 12 to 24 fish per boat. Some flounder are still around and are being taken at the Jones Beach Coast Guard Station, in Long Creek, and at Buoys 14 and 16 in Reynolds Channel. Blackfish at the Meadowbrook Bridge and Long Creek, running 3 to 7 lbs. and falling to fiddler crabs.

Scotty's Marina told of good fluke fishing in Reynolds Channel where 90% of the fish are keepers and an occasional 5 to 6 pounder is take. Sand eels have been producing the best action. Flounders at the Coast Guard Station on worms and blackfish at the bridges on green crabs and fiddler crabs. Private boatman Irving Grossman did a job on small bluefish fishing along the beach at Lido on both Saturday and Sunday despite Saturday's blustery winds. These were all small fish and were taken on trolled umbrella rigs.

ISLAND PARK

Charlie at **Beckmann's Tackle** reported that excellent weakfishing has been going on at the Meadowbrook and Wantagh Bridges and Haunt's Creek. These fish run 3 to 13 lbs. with the average fish 7 to 10. Bingle Dandy lures, and jelly worms fished on a high-hook rig with a Junebug spinner have been taking the bulk of the fish. Fluke fishing has been good but due to very strong tides over the weekend best catches were made by anglers either stemming the tide to slow their drift or by anchoring up and using bunker chum. Blackfish at the bridges on fiddler crabs.

JAMAICA BAY

Cross Bay Bait & Tackle reported that blacks are beginning to take hold for those using fiddlers and clams and some flounder are still around, also at the bridges. Marty

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Kubif had 7 bluefish from 1 to 5 lbs. on bunker chunks at the North Channel Bridge last weekend.

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

The **Zephyr** reports that bad weather over the weekend made fishing rough. The boat has been fishing the Seabright area and offshore wreck where fishermen are averaging a five-gallon pail full with sea bass, blackfish and a couple of ling.

The **Dorothy B** had a tough time fluking on Saturday and returned to port early because of the bad weather conditions. On Sunday, the boat fished Rockaway and East Rockaway Inlet with sand eels to take 75 fluke up to 3 lbs. for 15 fares. No throwbacks were taken.

The **Big Mohawk II** had charters out on both Saturday and Sunday, despite the bad weekend weather. On Saturday, the Marine Square Club of N.Y. fished on the mussel beds west of the Rockaway Jetty and took an average of 18-20 flounder in the 1½-2 lb. range and some blackfish from 2½-4 lbs. Baits used were skimmers and sand worms for flatties and fiddlers for the blacks. On Sunday, a charter headed by Pat McDonagh of The Bronx returned to the Rockaway Jetty area and did very good on the blackfish, with only a few flounder. This fishing subsided around 11AM. The boat then ran offshore where good ling action was found 17 mile southwest of Scotland.

The **Atomic II** did fair to good whiting and ling fishing a 1/2 mile north of Scotland. In the morning, the action was slow, but picked up as the day went on. High hook was Lenny the plumber with 65 fish, mostly ling.

Charter boat **Babe** called to tell us Sunday's six man charter for Mary's Market, Bronx enjoyed a good catch of flounder and blacks off the Breezy Pt. jetty, followed by a topping off of the bags with ling and whiting fishing between the channels. Mike and Jack kept the fish coming with involuntary chumming.

Stella Maris Bait and Tackle informs us that the whiting, ling and blackfishing when the weather permits is a pretty steady number at Ambrose for the boats fishing these species.

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The Elsie K III reports they are working a little south of the Rockaway Pt. Jetty and fares are getting good catches of flounders, and blacks on both running tides.

STATEN ISLAND

Lenny at **Santo's Sport Shop** reports blackfishing in the area is good for both boatmen and casters. Surfmen take fish at piers 8 and 17, the Jetty at Great Kills Park, and the old home dock at Annandale. Boatmen are averaging 20 blacks apiece in the 2 to 5 lb. range. Fiddler crabs and sandworms take these fish. Ten to twelve lb. bluefish are being taken by trollers near the Verrazano Bridge. This is the first showing of blues in the area and will hopefully develop into a good run. Small bass, from shorts to 5 lbs. still being taken on worms and small bucktails at Jersey St., Cliff St., and Penny's Beach.

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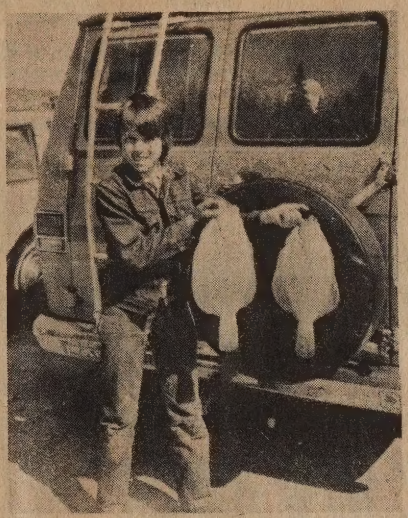
WEAKFISH

GREENPORT

Captain George Porter's **Brand X** started night fishing Friday night and had slightly over 200 weaks and blues mixed. Weaks ran to 12 lbs. and blues from 3-6 lbs. Saturday night, the boat also had over 200 mixed fish working Peconic Bay on both tides, even with the blowing wind and the northeast rains. They have been fishing the bottom with squid.

AP White Bait Shop reports that good weakfishing has been taking place in the early morning and again at night. Many fish from 6 to 12 lbs. have been taken on jelly worms, Mr. Twisters, and Salty Dogs. The Middle Grounds, and the west side of Shelter Island have been producing the best action. Nine year old Michelle Strobel weighed in an 11½ lb. weak taken aboard Capt. Bob's **Prime-Time** over the weekend. Art also reported that flounder fishing has been good around Gardiners Island, Petty's Bight, and Orient Point. Fished are mixed in size and are being taken on both sandworms and mussels.



Part of a catch of 30 big flounder taken by Scott Sztorc and his Dad, Bob, at the Ruins in Gardiner's Bay. Sandworms and mussel chum resulted in the fine catch. Subscriber photo.

SOUTHOLD

Ace of the **Port of Egypt Fishing Station** said that despite the lousy weather some weakfish were taken over the weekend at buoys 17 and 18. These are all big fish running from 7 to 12 lbs. with bluefish and fluke mixed in with the weaks. Porgies are being taken on the west side of Jessups and flounders at Petty's Bight and off of the Orient point State Park for those still interested in flat. Sunday's biggest weakfish weighed in at 12 lb. 11 oz. and on Saturday fished were discovered off of Greenlawn as boats could not make the run to the Race due to the weather. These fish were taken on sandworms and squid fished on hi-lo rigs.

NEW SUFFOLK

Capt. Marty's Fishing Station told us that most of the weekend was a blow-out. Fishing was down on Sunday also due to the previous couple of days east winds. Porgies have made a good appearance and those fishing specifically for them catch an average of 20 fish per boat in the 2½ lb. range. Best area has been south of buoy 23. Three to four pound bluefish and fluke up to 6 lb. 10 oz. have been mixed in with the

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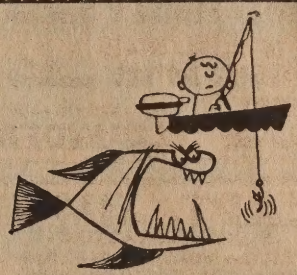

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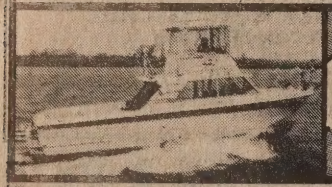

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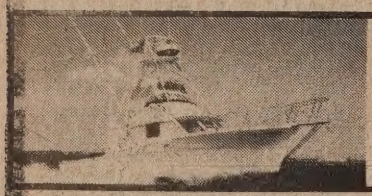

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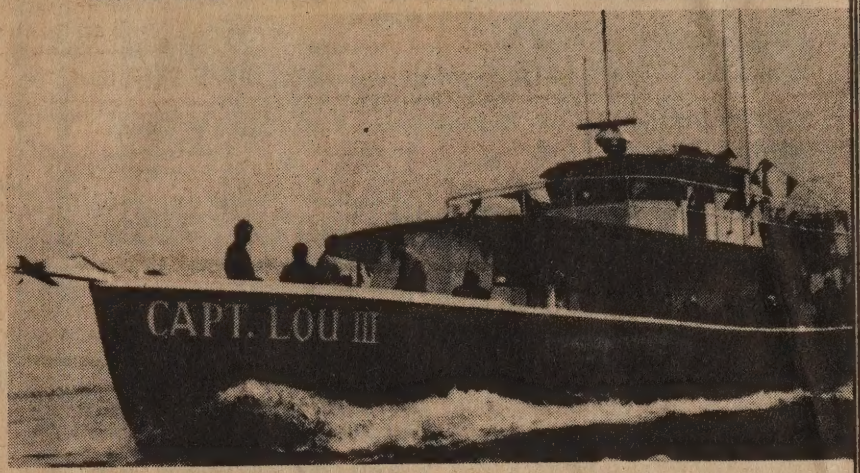

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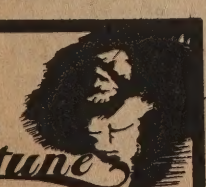

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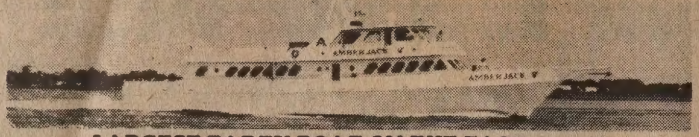

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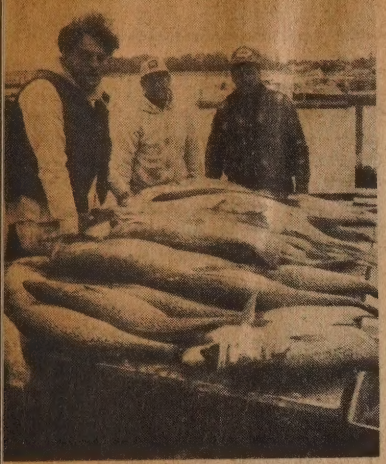
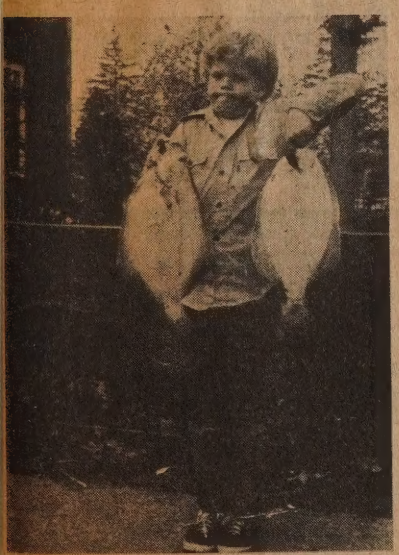


This huge haul of 80 weaks from 7-10 lbs. was made in Peconic Bay by Roger Pfeiffer, Howie, and Bill Gugliotta. The trio left from Port of Egypt Fishing Station.

AQUEBOGUE

Warren's Bait & Tackle reports that there are some mackerel, flounder, and blackfish in the Sound but some good weather is needed to settle everything down. Weaks being taken in the South Race on jelly worms and Salty Dogs tipped with squid and porgy fishing is just getting underway. While on the phone with Warren, there was a 25 lb. bass on ice in the shop which was taken late Sunday night. There were no other details on this fish other than it was taken from the surf.



Nine-year-old Mike Densen shows off a pair of Gardiner's Bay snowshoes. The fish weighed in at 5 and 4½ lbs., and were taken on mussel bait. Subscriber photo.

NOYAC

Barbara of **Noyac Marina** lamented about the weekend's wet windy weather but said that a few of the boats that did get out on Sunday managed to do okay. As soon as the weather settles down the weakfish action should continue at last week's hectic pace. Best spot for weaks has been buoy 16 while 4 to 6 lb. bluefish have been taken at buoy 17. A couple of fluke are also beginning to show up in catches.

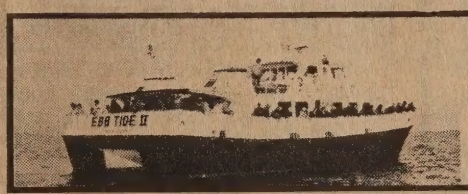
PECONICS

Speck's Bait and Tackle says fishing was fast and steady through Thursday. Weaks were good through the Peconics on jelly worms and on bucktails, fish running from 5-11 lbs. Some bass were taken at the ferry slip, fish from 5-15 lbs. trolled on umbrellas with white tubes working best in the dark hours. Tobacco Lot produced flounder Wednesday for two anglers who had over 40 big flatties all over 2 lbs., taken at Eastern Plains Pt., the north side of Tobaccolot. Sunday saw anglers Joe and Mike Mantovi, Dick Pastorelli and Bob Smith boat over 40 blackfish up to 7 lbs., taken at Promised Land on sand worms on both the running tide and the slack.

Guy DiBlasio called to tell us that on Wednesday he, Al Ristori, and 4 buddies bagged 105 weaks averaging 9½ lb. each fishing the Peconics out of **Capt. Marty's Fishing Station** in New Suffolk. Catches were made on red and purple jelly worms. Guy says that he is also getting 8 to 10 inch herring fishing the East River.

Guy DeBlasio with a handsome catch of 18 weaks taken at the South Race on Salty Dogs and jelly worms. Photo courtesy Capt. Marty's Fishing Station.

★CITY ISLAND★



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ROCKY POINT

Stan of the **Rocky Point Fishing Stop** tells of very good blackfishing from Cedar Beach to Wading River. These fish are being taken on fiddler crabs, green crabs, and sandworms. There has been a showing of porgies at Mt. Misery Point and flounder are still hanging in there at Wading River and Buoy 11. Plenty of mackerel are in the area but have been scattered due to all of the east winds. Most consistent area has been the Middle Grounds. Stan noted that the large numbers of school bass that were being taken along the beaches the past two weeks have virtually disappeared. However, a few weaks have been showing up for casters and Stan also saw a 3 lb. blue taken over the weekend.

MT. SINAI HBR.

Ralph's Fishing Station told us that Sunday was a good day for mackerel and blackfishing. Blackfish are being taken on clams and fiddler crabs close to the beaches particularly Miller Place. Friday and Saturday were pretty much a wash-out.

PORT JEFFERSON

Jim at **Caraftis Fishing Station** reported that they got some boats out on Sunday. Mackerel were found at buoy 11 with some weakfish mixed in and blackfish were taken at the Jetty near the mouth of the Harbor. Blackfish are also found in close along the Sound Beaches. Sandworms and fiddler crabs take these fish. Some bass being taken on trolled worms inside the harbor while surfcasters take a few fish along the Sound shorefront.

KINGS PARK

Artie at **Sea and Ski** tells us that on Wednesday, Steve Radle had 70 macks up to 2½ lbs. in just one hour fishing by the big buoy, which is black can. This was on outgoing or mackerel rigs with a diamond jig at the bottom. A 10 lb. blackfish was taken Sunday in Northport off the dock on clam bait.

Bob at **OK Bait & Tackle** told us that on Saturday Tom Hart, Alfie Dwyer, Jerry Koliner, and himself boated 300 lb. of mackerel in 65' of water outside the mouth of the river. This despite Saturday's stormy weather. On Sunday Bob weighed in a 7 lb. 13 oz. blackfish for Tom Acervo which he took at Callahan's while flounder fishing. Another blackfish of 5 lb. was taken by flounder fisherman Paul Abassi at the Mansion. Both these fish were taken on worms. Also on Sunday Sal and Sophie Bruno, and Pat and Tom Dalcamo loaded up with 75 flounder and over 100 mackerel fishing off of the Mansion. Flounders were taken on sandworms with lots of mussel chum and the mackerel were taken on jigs.

HUNTINGTON

The Ever Ready reports Huntington Bay is enjoying very good catches of flounder, macks, weaks and blacks, particularly macks. Captain Don says that after this week the boat will be running days only on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Night trips will be Tuesday and Thursday only, allowing time for private charters.

Charter boat **Eclipse** called to tell us he loaded up with macks on Sunday, which will be part of his bait and chum strategy for his

EDITORIAL
(**Continued from page 5.**)

are based. The change in the attitude of the State Department is remarkable: could it really be that it has finally stopped worrying about hurting the feelings of the Japanese or antagonizing the powerful tuna lobby? Could it possibly be that the State Department has suddenly discovered that it may have antagonized some thirty or forty million recreational sportfishermen, who also happen to be American citizens, who not coincidentally will be voting in a Presidential election in little over a year?

Perhaps someone heard the sleeping giant snore ... imagine what sportfishermen could accomplish if we rubbed our eyes.

Scott F. Simons

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There recently appeared in this section the statement that Mitchell's Dock, Greenport is closed. We have been informed by A.P. White Tackle Shop & Mr. Mitchell that Mitchell's Dock is open and conducting business there as usual.

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E.C.M. Contracting, Inc. Complete underwat diving services; u/w photography & hull inspe tions - salvage - ship repairs. Dock building repair; u/w construction. Scuba instruction Y.M.C.A. - P.A.P.I. Licensed C.G. Ocea operators. Alan J. Czak, Bart L. Cariello 516-242-6735.

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FISHING TACKLE

FREE CATALOG—Hooks, rigs, diamond jigs, bucktails, Bananas, Rebels, umbrella rigs, Tri-Fins, and Jelly Worms. PLUS a lot more at discount prices. Send to: CUSTOM TACKLE, BOX 38, DEPT. 1, SEAFORD, NY 11783. FOR QUICK DELIVERY: Phone 516-799-7031.

FREE CATALOG—Quality Saltwater Rigs. HUDSON TACKLE, P. O. Box 437, Dept. L., Kearny, N.J. 07032.

Fantastic Shakespeare Combo—5' 10" #SP1100 Ugly Stik, all ceramic guides; and Shakespeare #5910 skirted spool spinning reel. Brand new; still in original factory wrappings. - $75. 516-223-6135 or 516-868-2391. After 6PM.

FLUKE KILLER RIGS!! The ULTIMATE in fluke killer rigs. Deadly double hook design. Long time secret of the "Pros." You will hook more and lose fewer fluke, since fish can't avoid the full adjustable tail hook. Each rig is hand tied; finest materials used. Pays for itself in fluke dinners. Three completely tied rigs only $3.50. Send check or M.O. to: P. MILLER, 150 Babylon Tpke., Merrick, NY 11566.

Droppers—Our DROPPA the hottest lure from Cape Cod for bass, blues and weaks, is available by mail in white, yellow, blue, olive, blue-white and black. 5/0 stainless hook. $1.39 ea., 5 for $5.95; 10 for $9.95. (Conn. residents 7%). ANGLING AIDS, P.O. Box 280. Old Saybrook, Ct. 06475. #18

WANTED: Rockaway Sailfish Chairs or parts. Any condition. 516-798-7531.

JNR RODS
BEWARE OF IMITATIONS! These custom built rods are the FINEST available, yet only pennies above the cost of commercial tackle. Four to Six week delivery. Call evenings: 212-271-1182.

Fluke hooks - $1 a doz. Golden Eagle Claw hooks, long shank 3 ft. leader. Add $.15 per doz. postage. Weakfisherman Shrimptail jigs. Pink or white. A great value. $.50. Add $.05 ea. postage. CAPTAIN HOOK, 103 Georgia Ave., Long Beach, NY. 11561.

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CENTER MORICHES—Waterfront, Bulkhead, Boat Slip. Ten minutes to inlet. Six room ranch; fireplace, carpeting. $390 month; one year lease. 516-567-2561.

WATERFRONT HI-RANCH—IN BEAUTIFUL BALDWIN HARBOR: 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, huge den. Close to Bay. Excellent boating and fishing. A steal at $63,000. JOYCE BAYER, WATERFRONT SPECIALIST. 516-378-1175.

DEER RUN ESTATES, Southern Catskill Mountains; 2½ hour drive from L.I. Excellent hunting, fishing, skiing area. Preparing for gravel roads, electric. (3-4-5) Wooded acre parcels, $3500 Per Acre, (15) year terms. For brochure, phone DEER RUN ESTATES 516-666-6171.

LAST CHANCE—DON'T WAIT: Pre-Season Special. FISHERMAN'S DELIGHT in White Lake, N.Y. Newly stocked with trout; bass, perch. Cottages and efficiencies available. Group sharing OK! Weekly, monthly; seasonal rates. Reasonable. Contact Ellen: 212-646-3232.

MONTAUK
SUMMER RENTAL—Monthly or Full Season. Two bedroom, cozy furnished cottage on East Lake Dr. Convenient to beaches; fishing; airport. Reasonable to responsible person. 516-691-1828.

RARE OPPORTUNITY—Boatyard Business for sale, on Merrick Rd. in Copiague waterfront. Only $5,000. 842-5726 After 6PM.

FISHING STATION & BOAT YARD BUSINESS FOR SALE: $25,000. 2/3 Down. Options. Call: 516-363-6024 after 6:30 p.m.

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USES THE REAL FISH IN OUR EXCLUSIVE PSYAPERMY MOUNT!
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CLIFF EBERHARD
32 Fifth Ave., BAY SHORE, L.I.
★ (516) 665-5461 ★

pursual of ground sharks this summer in Long Island Sound. A lot of bass have been taken all week from the local North Shore shore line, fish from 10-35 lbs. on 4½" split tail Rebels with a feather teaser 4' up front.

Allen Denicola reported from **Four Winds Bait & Tackle** that 5 and 6 lb. weakfish have made a showing off of Diamond Point. These fish are taking Tri-Fin eel worms and jelly worms. Allen knew of school stripers being taken on small Rebels in Cold Spring Harbor and also reported that blacks are being taken in Huntington Inlet. These fish weigh up to 5 lb. and are falling for sandworms. Flounders still around at Eaton's Neck but is becoming spotty. Those that are being taken are 1 lb. to 1½ lb.

A weary Ronnie Ferrara of **Ronnie's Bait & Tackle** came to the phone to report that the fishing which has been going on at the Lloyd Neck Causeway the past couple of weeks busted loose Sunday evening. Bass from 5 to 35 lbs. and weakfish up to 10 lbs. provided lots of action for casters on the scene. Some of the fish weighed in since Thursday night included Bob Nurnberger with a 35 pounder, Bill Barnhardt a 25 and 20 pounder, Jerry Carbone a 28 pounder, Jim Piacenti a 24 pounder, and Ed Parkinson of the Sound and Surf Anglers had a 27 lb. striper as well as 5 weaks to 10 lbs. On Sunday night fish were on the surface chasing bait until early morning. Mark Rinaldo and Dave Kartski had 2 bass and 10 big weakfish. Besides the bigger bass being taken there are good numbers of 5 to 12 lb. stripers present. Ronnie passed the word that the secret to this fishing is a 4½" Rebel with a white dropper rigged ahead of it. Sixty to seventy percent of the fish are being taken on the droppers. Ronnie has been staying awake nights trying to keep up with the demand and he will be more than happy to show those stopping by how to rig them.

FOR SALE: *A Boat with Charisma!* 1953 30 ft. wood lapstrake Craftsman, built like a tank—ribs 8-inch on center. Full keel, stem controls, 120 HP Palmer engine, 150 hours new, fresh water cooled, fly bridge. Great for pin hooking. May not be pretty, but they don't build 'em like this anymore. On display at Henry's Star Island Yacht Club, Montauk, or give Scott a call at (516) 725-4200 days. $4,000 firm (?).

Island Fish Net & Supply Co., Inc.
(516) 589-0749
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Little Jo Jo Fusaro holds one of the 300 macks taken by his Dad, Jo Jo and Uncle Carl. Photo courtesy of Ronnie's Bait & Tackle.

NORTH SHORE WEST END

★ BEST BET ★

BLACKFISH

COLD SPRING Hbr.

Mark at **Salty's Bait & Tackle** reported that Frank Diana and Bob Carey stopped by on their return trip from the Peconics with 10 weakfish from 6½ to 10½ lbs. last Thursday. Mackerel were taken from the beach at Center Island over the weekend and a few weakfish were mixed in with these fish. Some bass on trolled worms along the Cold Spring Harbor Causeway also a few fish up to 8 lbs. for casters using Rebels at Center Island Reef. Good blackfishing at the Black Bell Buoy inside the harbor on fiddlers, sandworms, and skimmers.

BRONX

Captain Howie Berlin's **Super Claire** reports they are still loading up on macks in the Sound.

FLUSHING BAY

Captain Berlin's **Claire II** will be starting for flounder and blacks for the season by the time you read this report, and a strong season is expected. This boat sails from the World's Fair Marina in Flushing.

CITY ISLAND

Jack of **Jack's Bait & Tackle** told of lots of blackfish at Hart's Island, Ft. Slocum, Execution Light, and the old CBS Tower. East winds have made it very difficult for boatmen to get out, but when the weather cooperates the fishing is good. Mackerel still east of Execution Light and Hart's Island continues to produce bass from 3 to 5 lbs. on Smiling Bill bucktails and blackback and mackerel finished Rebels. Flounders are petering out and few anglers are spending any time on them.

New Products

NEW SEEIN'S BELIEVING PRESCOTT DOCTOR SPOON

The Prescot Doctor® Spoon is recognized for its erratic, sweeping motion that imitates both the action and the flash of a bait fish. Now, the Prescott Spinner Company, a division of Fred Arbogast Company, has added an exclusive new Seein's Believin (TM) Dace finish to the Doctor to make it even more bait fish looking, and game fish appealing. The Dace is one of the most common foodfish found in freshwater. By means of modern, photo duplicating technology, a very realistic Dace imitation pattern is applied to the bright Doctor Spoon surface. The Doctor Spoon is available in a wide range of weights for all freshwater fishing techniques. Hook can be attached to either end for deep or shallow running actions. The Prescott Spinner Company, 788 Evans Avenue, Akron, OH 44305.

Pass It On...

NOTICE TO READERS

On April 28, 1979, Mr. Robert Joseph of Oakdale, L.I., a long-time party boat owner!operator from the Captree Boat Basin, Babylon passed away.

His widow, Mrs. Penny Joseph, has chosen the SEPTA Organization (Special Education PTA) as recipient of donations made in memory of his name and outstanding love for all children.

SEPTA wishes to extend its deepest appreciation to Mrs. Joseph and her two daughters, Ronnie and Jodi for their magnanimous gesture. This gift will enable SEPTA to pursue its goals and enrich the lives of handicapped children across the Island.

A Robert Joseph Memorial Fund for Handicapped Children has been formed by SEPTA and any donations can be sent to:

SEPTA
30 Cedar Point Drive
West Islip, N.Y. 11795

★ DINING OUT ★ DINING OUT ★

SEAFOOD BARGE

—ON PECONIC BAY—

MAIN ROAD, SOUTHOLD, LONG ISLAND

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BROILED FRESH FISH OUR SPECIALTY!

★ NOW OPEN 7 DAYS ★

—12 Noon to 10 PM—

L.I.E. (Rt. 495) to Exit 73— Exit 73 to the Barge.

HIGH TIDE TABLES

DAY	SANDY HOOK AM	SANDY HOOK PM	Breakwater Harbor AM	Breakwater Harbor PM	NEW YORK AM	NEW YORK PM	NEW LONDON AM	NEW LONDON PM	WILLETS POINT AM	WILLETS POINT PM	BRIDGE-PORT AM	BRIDGE-PORT PM	NEW-PORT AM	NEW-PORT PM	DATE
THUR.	7:21	7:42	8:07	8:32	7:58	8:20	8:57	9:12	11:25	11:41	10:50	11:06	7:09	7:30	5/24
FRI.	8:09	8:25	8:55	9:17	8:46	9:06	9:45	9:56	–	12:13	11:37	11:52	7:57	8:16	5/25
SAT.	8:52	9:06	9:42	10:00	9:33	9:49	10:30	10:40	12:24	12:57	–	12:24	8:42	9:02	5/26
SUN.	9:34	9:48	10:27	10:43	10:21	10:34	11:14	11:25	1:04	1:39	12:36	1:08	9:28	9:47	5/27
MON.	10:20	10:29	11:12	11:27	11:08	11:19	11:58	–	1:42	2:22	1:21	1:51	10:12	10:30	5/28
TUE.	11:05	11:11	11:55	–	11:58	–	12:08	12:47	2:15	2:59	2:03	2:34	10:58	11:16	5/29
WED.	11:53	11:56	12:09	12:42	12:07	12:49	12:54	1:35	2:48	3:38	2:47	3:19	11:46	–	5/30
THUR.	–	12:40	12:55	1:33	12:52	1:34	1:42	2:30	3:22	4:16	3:32	4:04	12:02	12:34	5/31

HOW TO USE TIDE TABLES:

To compute the high tide for the area you wish to fish, simply find the closest area on the conversion tables. Add or subtract the hours and minutes as indicated from that areas station above. Example: "Shinnecock Inlet.....—0 50" is listed under "On SANDY HOOK." —0 50 means you subtract 50 minutes from the times given for the SANDY HOOK STATION for the day you are going fishing. This is the approximate time for the high tide in the area. For low tide, add 6 ½ hours to this figure.

On SANDY HOOK

STATEN ISLAND	+ 0 27
ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS	—0 01
Red Bank, Navesink R.I.	+ 0 48
Long Branch	—0 34
SHARK RIVER INLET	—0 18
Shark River Basin	+ 0 27
MANASQUAN INLET	—0 12
Seaside Park	—0 33
Mantoloking Bridge	+ 5 34
TOMS RIVER	+ 4 37
Waretown	+ 2 33
BARNEGAT LIGHT	—0 20
Manahawkin Bridge	+ 2 33
Beach Haven	+ 1 47
LITTLE EGG INLET	—0 01
Seven Islands	+ 0 12
Graveling Point	+ 1 05
Mullica River	+ 1 55
Grassy Bay	+ 1 08
ABSECON INLET	+ 0 14
Atlantic City Pier	—0 26
Gt. Egg Harbor Inlet	+ 0 12
GREAT EGG HARBOR	+ 0 46
CORSON INLET	+ 0 09
TOWNESEND INLET	+ 0 06
HEREFORD INLET	+ 0 02
Grassy Sound Bridge	+ 0 45
Cape May Harbor	—0 02
Rehoboth Beach	—0 07
INDIAN RIVER INLET	+ 0 14
SHINNECOCK INLET	—0 50
Shinnecock Bay	+ 1 25
East Quogue	+ 2 45
Shinnecock Canal	+ 1 18
Indian Reservation	+ 3 05
MORICHES INLET	—0 56
Smith's Point	+ 3 28
Harts Cove	+ 1 30
Potunck Point	+ 3 35
Mastic Beach	+ 3 28
FIRE ISLAND INLET	—0 38
Democrat Point	—0 38
Coast Guard Station	—0 19
Fire Island Light	+ 0 47
GREAT SOUTH BAY	
Sayville	+ 3 39
Heckscher State Pk.	+ 3 20
Bay Shore	+ 2 23
Babylon	+ 2 12
Amityville	+ 2 21
JONES INLET	—0 19
Zachs Bay	+ 1 25
Seaford Harbor	+ 2 05
Freeport Creek	+ 0 34
E. ROCKAWAY INLET	—0 06
Long Beach Bridge	+ 0 19
ROCKAWAY INLET	—0 00
Beach Ch. Bridge	+ 0 38
JFK Airport	+ 0 26

On BRIDGEPORT

Lloyd Point	+ 0 08
Cold Spring Harbor	+ 0 08
Bayville Bridge	+ 0 13
Eatons Neck Point	+ 0 03
Northport Bay	+ 0 03
Norwalk Islands	+ 0 10
Smithtown Bay	—0 03
Cranes Neck Point	+ 0 05
Port Jefferson Harbor	+ 0 03
New Haven Harbor	+ 0 08
Mount Sinai Harbor	—0 08
Herod Point	—0 07
Mattituck Inlet	+ 0 19
Horton Point	—0 20
Truman Beach	—0 42
Falkner Island	—0 13
Sachem Head	—0 10
Branford Harbor	—0 07
New Haven Harbor	—0 08
Milford Harbor	—0 07
Stratford	+ 0 27
Shelton	+ 1 36
Black Rock Harbor	—0 03
Saugatuck River	—0 01
South Norwalk	+ 0 10
Greens Ledge	—0 01
Stamford	+ 0 04
Cos Cob Harbor	+ 0 06
Greenwich	+ 0 02

On NEW LONDON

Orient Point	+ 0 27
Little Gull Is. (Race)	+ 0 12
Greenport	+ 1 04
Southold	+ 1 43
New Suffolk	+ 2 26
South Jamesport	+ 2 32
Shinnecock Canal	+ 2 33
Noyack Bay	+ 2 05
Sag Harbor	+ 0 59
Gardiners Bay	+ 0 21
Promised Land	—0 14
Montauk Inlet	—0 25
Montauk Point	—1 13
Niantic	+ 1 20
Stonington	—0 33
Noank, Mystic River	—0 23
THAMES RIVER	
Smith Cove	—0 01
Norwich	+ 0 09
CONNECTICUT RIVER	
Saybrook jetty	+ 1 10
Lyme	+ 1 24
Essex	+ 1 38
East Haddam	+ 2 41
Higganum Creek	+ 2 54

On WILLETS PT.

Little Neck Bay	—0 10
Execution Light	—0 06
Manhasset Bay	—0 01
Hempstead Harbor	—0 11
City Island	—0 03
Rye Beach	—0 28
Port Chester	—0 09
Mamaroneck	—0 08
New Rochelle	—0 24
Davids Island	—0 02

On B'WATER HB.

CAPE MAY POINT	—0 10
Miami Beach	+ 1 17
East Point	+ 0 53
Egg Island Point	+ 0 33
Cape Henlopen	—0 05
ROOSEVELT INLET	+ 0 09
Mispillion River Ent.	+ 0 33
St. Jones River Ent.	+ 0 57

On NEW YORK

Jersey City	+ 0 07
Geo. Washington Br.	+ 0 46
Spuyten Duyvil	+ 0 58
Ossining	+ 1 53
Peekskill	+ 2 24
West Point	+ 3 16
Newburg	+ 3 42

On NEWPORT

Sakonnet	—0 10
Tiverton	+ 0 21
Beavertail Point	—0 02
Prudence Is., Sandy Pt.	+ 0 10
Bristol	+ 0 10
Warren	+ 0 21
Nayatt Point	+ 0 12
Pawtucket	+ 0 21
East Greenwich	+ 0 16
Wickford	+ 0 12
Narragansett Pier	—0 08
Point Judith Harbor	—0 07
BLOCK ISLAND	
Great Salt Pond	+ 0 05
Old Harbor	—0 14
Watch Hill Point	+ 0 44

SUNRISE/SUNSET

5/1	5:57	7:57
5/6	5:50	8:04
5/11	5:44	8:09
5/16	5:39	8:14
5/21	5:34	8:19
5/26	5:31	8:24

PHASES OF THE MOON

NEW	1st Qtr.	FULL	2nd Qtr.
5/26	5/4	5/12	5/18

The Original Knight SOLUNAR TABLES When To Fish Or Hunt

The schedule of solunar periods for the following week as printed below has been taken from the original Knight Solunar Tables. Plan your day so that you will be fishing good areas during these times when the fish should be most active. The tables are not a guarantee you will catch fish, however.

The major periods begin at the time shown and last for an hour-and-a-half or two hours thereafter, and are in the bold type face. The minor periods are shorter in duration and lighter type.

	AM Minor	AM Major	PM Minor	PM Major
Thurs.	3:45	10:20	4:10	10:45
Fri.	4:30	11:10	5:00	11:35
Sat.	5:20	11:55	5:50	—
Sun.	6:05	12:20	6:35	12:50
Mon.	7:00	1:15	7:25	1:50
Tues.	8:05	2:15	8:25	2:40
Wed.	8:55	3:10	9:20	3:35
Thurs.	9:50	4:00	10:10	4:25

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Modell's

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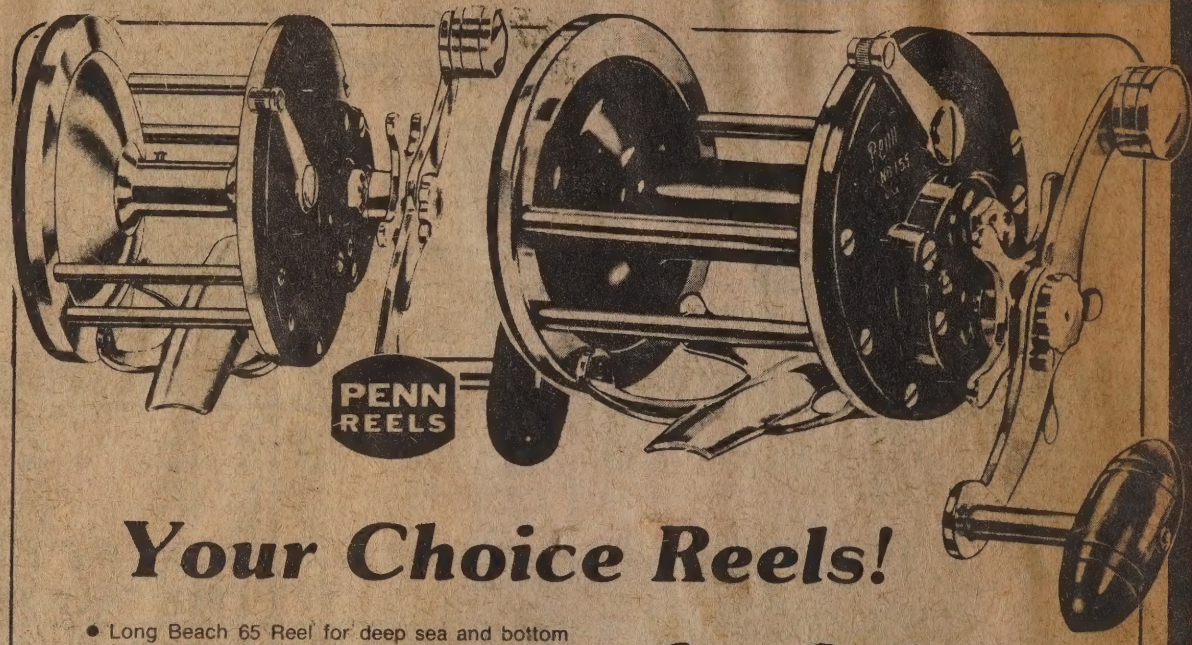

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- Long Beach 65 Reel for deep sea and bottom fishing. Choice of party boat captain and fisherman who want dependable bottom fishing or trolling reels at a modest cost. Limit 1.
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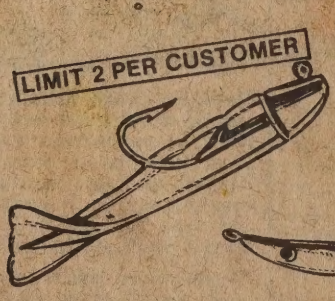

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Make your catch with these salty dog jumbo shrimp.

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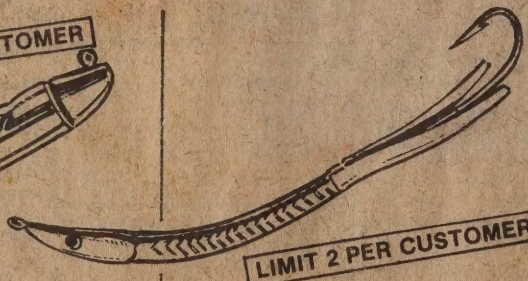

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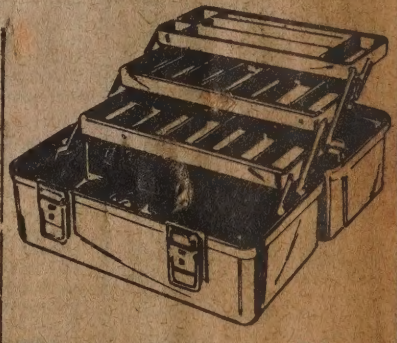

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With 20 convenient compartments for all your tackle. 17⅛ x 8¾" x 8½" #1730

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HEMPSTEAD TPKE. & FRONT ST.
PHONE: 794-9000

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JERICHO TPKE. & LARKFIELD RD.
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